

SCOTCH NOVEL READING.



A NOVEL.

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SCOTCH NOVEL READING

OR,

MODERN QUACKERY.

A NOVEL *REALLY* FOUNDED ON FACTS.

BY A COCKNEY.

‘ Who will laugh at us now ?’

“ Marry, the child unborn !” BEN JOHNSON’S *Widow*.

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SCOTCH NOVEL READING.

CHAPTER

Incidents of Importance.

ABOUT a fortnight had passed away, in all the sullen civility of disappointment, on the part of Robert Butler; while his father, pleased at his obedience in not acting diametrically opposite to his commands, endeavoured, by every means of conciliation in his power, to render his home agreeable to him; the *name* even of Fennel's daughter, or of Fennel himself, were never mentioned; and though Robert had the sincerest respect and regard for the amiable Mrs.

Hannah Meredith, though he had promised to join the party assembled at Harlow, to celebrate her birthday, yet, as the name of Alice Fennel, since his father's marriage proposal, had become more and more hateful to Robert, he determined, let what would be the consequence, to break off his engagement with the good old lady.

He therefore, on the very day, sent a note by his father, pretending indisposition; and though he averred it was but slight, yet it was of that nature which, if, by going out, he should take cold, might be rendered very dangerous. His father did not believe him, judged well what were his motives, but durst not urge him to accompany him, knowing his dislike to Alice, and fearful of his setting off for Paris, if he met with the least contradiction.

The summer was now advancing, and every one who could afford an excursion in the country, were about to quit town

town for the sanative enjoyment of a clearer air. Mr. Butler mentioned many pleasurable removals to his son, for about six weeks or two months, at the different summer recesses and watering-places. Robert would not listen to any arrangement of this kind; for he was extremely anxious and uneasy at not hearing from his friend Lovemore; and he resolved not to quit town till he had some intelligence from him.—“I have several engagements, sir,” said he, “at various places this summer; but they will not suit you. I therefore hope you will go where best pleases yourself, and I will join you as soon as possible; but I have some indispensable visits to pay first, only a few miles distance from town.”

Mr. Butler, senior, was not fond of the country in the short days of the modern summer, which seldom commences before August; it was now the latter end of June, and he was impatient to be

gone. He was very desirous that his friend Fennel should be of his party to Brighton; but Fennel hated all watering-places, except really for invalids.—“My daughter,” he would say, “and myself, are not fish; we were born without fins; but one would imagine the people of London were not; for, as soon as the summer sets in, off they must go, to dabble in the sea, whether good for their constitution or not. My girl and I, thank God, do not want this salt water washing; we have always a wholesome, tepid bath at home; and she shall not spoil her beautiful skin with seawater, till, which Heaven avert from her! want of health brings with it want of beauty. For myself, I am as strong and hearty as a roach; and what do I want now, with what I never used in my life, sea-washing? No, no; go you where you like; you are more attached to fashion than I am, and all, what I call, the fal lal customs of the modish world.

When

When I am in the country, I love its real rural scenes. Howard and his wife they generally go to Cheltenham; that's too far for me—the fatigue of the journey takes away more than half the pleasure; and if you travel by slow stages, there's all that time lost: then the society at these places of fashionable resort has a sameness that wearies me to death. Alice loves to admire the beauties of nature, and ramble among the fields and well-cultivated gardens at about twelve or twenty miles distance from London; and, with her book and her needle, she diverts her time, and enjoys herself better than she would among a parcel of pert girls, who would despise her because her pa' did not keep a carriage; and the pale-faced, fantastical females, who want a little sea-washing, would call her robust, and turn up their noses with envy, at the constant freshness of her healthy countenance."

Butler had never told his friend of the

rejected proposal he had made his son : he changed countenance, however, at the name of Alice, and remarked, that he wondered his dear friend did not put some little restriction on her reading.

“What for?” said Fennel, in his usual hasty way—“she reads none but good books. I am sure, though I hate every quackish imposition on a generous, too-easily gulled public, and you know I do, yet I think the most fastidious cannot discover a single impropriety in the novels that are called Walter Scott’s.”

“Oh, no,” said Butler; “yet see the effect they have had on your daughter’s mind.”

“Ah! that will all wear off in time.”

“It has been a cruel disappointment to me,” resumed Butler, “for I now fear, that what we had so much at heart, the union of our children, is farther off than ever; the Scotch mania increases so, every day, with Miss Fennel, that——”

“Ah!”

“ Ah !” interrupted Fennel, “ there you are wrong ; she is much improved, I think, in that respect, of late ; especially since her favourite writer, has given us less of Scottish lore ; he has somewhat declined in her favour, or I am much mistaken.”

“ But did you not see,” said Butler, “ the look and sneering smile that Robert gave her, the very last time they met, when she declared she never would marry any one but a Scottish hero ?”

“ That,” said Fennel, “ is some time back ; for they very seldom meet now : however, let the young folks do as they please—God forbid that we should endeavour to force their inclinations.”

“ Oh, certainly not !” said Butler ; “ I thought it was your most fervent wish that they should marry.”

“ That it was so,” said Fennel, seriously, “ I think has been sufficiently proved by my being the first to propose it ; but it was solely on condition that they

liked each other ; I am sure they do not ; and, be assured, you are the only man to whom I would make an offer of my daughter's hand for your child. Alice has plenty of time before her ; and as to your son Robert, I hope he will meet with one more agreeable to his taste."

Butler felt vexed ; he wanted very much to secure the fortune of Alice Fennel to his son ; though we must do him the justice to say, that friendship had most share in the ardent desire he felt to effect this marriage. A suspicion now crossed his mind, that Fennel had another husband in his eye for his daughter ; yet he had not quite that openness about him as his friend, and therefore he kept his ideas to himself ; saying, after a pause—" Well, I really should have very much liked for us to have been together, in the country, this summer ; for I shall go alone—Robert is elsewhere engaged."

" Ah !

“ Ah ! he is always engaged, I think.— But, my good fellow, if you wish to be with me, why not accompany me and my daughter to some pleasant rural retreat ; I assure you I have not yet fixed on the place I shall go to : it is but early at present.”

“ Oh dear !” said Butler, “ I thank you, but I must go to Brighton ; I shall meet so many of my acquaintance there, who expect me.”

“ Very well, my good friend,” said Fennel ; “ now, you, Howard, and myself never stay in the country when the days get very short, and we begin to wish for the luxury of a good Wall’s End coal fire in a comfortable London grate. We are not sportsmen, to go out on cold mornings, and put all the dear little winged creatures in terror of their lives, with our dogs and guns, and recommend ourselves to the ladies by those presents, which prove us to be men of blood ; therefore, if we part for a

little time now, we shall soon meet again; so let every one go, and enjoy himself, as shall best please him."

In the mean time, Robert Butler was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the foreign post. He had dispatched an instant reply to his friend's last letter, assuring him, that he would never do any thing in direct opposition to the will of his father; whom, against his better judgment, he had consented, in the ardour of his friendship, to deceive. His father had, he moreover told him, made such *dreadful* conditions if he did go to Paris, at that time, that he never would accede to. He exhorted Lovemore, in the most strenuous, and the most affectionate manner, to quit the fatal habit of play, which was rapidly leading him to destruction: he implored him to break off his present disgraceful connexions, that he must inevitably make with foreign gamblers, in his present ruinous occupation; he advised him to
travel

travel through Switzerland, among a virtuous and simple people, and cultivate, in retirement, there, his taste for reading and the arts; adding, that his purse and credit were at his disposal, to aid him in every prudential resolution; and he finished, by earnestly requesting him to answer his letter as soon as possible, which, he hoped, would inform him that he was determined to put the advice offered him into execution without delay.

The afternoon of that day on which his father had departed for Brighton, came a letter, directed in an unknown, and almost an unintelligible hand, with the Paris post-mark, addressed as follows:—"Too Mister Robberte Butteler, Esqueere, junor, Mortemurr-streete, Cawendishe-squair, Lunnon, in Inglelande.—Theese, wyth kare an speede."

Robert, in great agitation, fearful that the letter contained some ill news of poor Lovemore, hastily tore it open;

but had much difficulty in deciphering the following curious epistle :—

“ HONNORRED SURR,

“ Thiss cums wyth my humbell sarviss too yoo, an moste dootyfool respeécks. Oh, surr, my deer masterr, Mr. Gorge Lovemore, begs mee to rite deéreekely, an, att. the sayme tyme bids mee saye, thatt hee is shure thee juchmunt of Hevenn hass fallin onn hymm, for the reesins as wye, hee purtendid too bee ille wenn he was notte, an nowe, oh surr, he lays a dyein. Hee lost a grate deel o' munney syns yoo rote to un, an he tooked yoore last litter verry moutche to harte: an soe he went an played awaye, desprait like. By-an-by cumms an Itally gentillmann, awl the waye fromm Room; an hee allwayes plaid wythe verry badde luk, an my master wun munny of him; an soe, ass he was niver awaye from the gaymin
tabell,

tabell, ass a boddi maye saye. . Wun nite, surr, my master wunn a verry grate summ from the Itally gentillmann; he wos the sun of wott iss cawld a mar-keesaw in Room, but hiss faather kep the yung man verry shorte like; an mi master wun awl hee had: soe an plees yoo, the wicket Itally gentillmann, wott dus he doo, but follos my master hoam, in the darke, an stics him throo the bak wythe wott they cawls a stiltie in Room: an nowe my poore master lays a dyein of hiss wounds, wile the wicket Itally retch has fownd meenes to mayke hiss skape, an has gott aborde ashippe, bownde to summ forrin poarte. Itt is unpossibell for my deere master to lyve, ass awl the French surgins sayes: hee is qwyte sensabell, an wyshes verry moutche too see yure honner. Hee sayes he hass a grate deele to saye too yoo; an thay doo saye, howe he wille, mayhapp, live a fortynite longur, poore deere

deere gentillmann. Hoppin thatt yo
wille nott fale to cum,

“ I am, moste humbely,

“ Yoor poore sarvant too comande,

“ TIMOTHY RAWLINS,”

“ Inglish footemann to Mr. Gorge Love-
more, Esquair.

“ P. S. Prai, surr, loose no tyme: wee
ar livving at No. 6, Shozey Donting.”

Robert Butler, like his father, was an enthusiast in friendship, and he resolved that no prohibition should keep him from a dying friend. He ordered post-horses without delay; but conscious that he owed the duty to his father of letting him know what had happened, after taking off the address, which, he rightly judged, was at the Chaussée d'Antin, he enclosed the letter of Timothy to his father; merely stating, in the envelope, that he had set off to receive the last requests of the unfortunate Lovemore; and

and that, when he had closed his eyes, and arranged his last duties, he would instantly join his beloved parent at Brighton.

As Robert was passing through a pleasant village, or rather a small town, on the Kent road, as he was posting to Dover, in order to take the *regular* packet for France (for Fennel himself could not have a greater aversion to the steam system than Robert had), he saw a thick smoke issuing from a small cottage-*ornée*, the inhabitants of which he judged, from all outward appearance, must be buried in profound sleep. He ordered the postilion to stop, and he descended from the chaise, when he was met by the surgeon of the village and his wife, the latter in her white dishabille of the night. She cried out—"Oh, sir, whoever you are, help to rescue the sweet girl that lodges there, and her worthy father, from the fire, that I am
sure

sure is about to break out from that dwelling!"

Robert, in whose disposition love for his fellow-creatures was the predominant feature, heard no more. With athletic force, he assisted the surgeon, and some sturdy neighbours, in forcing an entrance into the dwelling, which was only one story high. He first penetrated into a chamber on the ground floor: the opening of the door caused the hitherto-smothered flames to burst forth, and their light shone full on, oh Heavens! Robert's long-admired *Sleeping Beauty*, sunk in the deep slumber of peaceful innocence!

To raise her from the bed, to clasp her lovely form to his bosom, was but the work of a moment: in her struggle to free herself, she thoroughly awoke: she then sunk abashed on his breast, and there sought to hide the shame she felt.—“You are safe,” said he to her,
“as

“as with your sister angels; but the house will soon be in flames.”

“Oh!” shrieked she, in tremulous accents, “save! oh, save my father!”

Robert had borne her from the house, and instantly delivered her up to the care of the friendly surgeon’s wife, who wrapping her own mantle round her, was out of sight with her in an instant.

The surgeon returned with a ladder he had hastened to procure, in order to ascend an upper apartment, where the old gentleman slept. Robert seized it, and on his entrance found the chamber enveloped in smoke, and a gentleman extended on the floor, near a bureau: he was nearly dressed, and was grasping a trinket very forcibly in his hand.

Happily the staircase had not caught fire, for the engines were already playing where the flames had burst out. Robert, therefore, dragged the old gentleman to the door, on the outside of which were the rest of the cottage inmates,

mates, whose lives had been thus providentially saved.

The air revived the father of the young lady, but, in his pallid face and convulsed features, Robert could not distinguish the expression of his countenance, and he almost feared he was dying. At length, the rescued gentleman gave a deep sigh, and as he energetically grasped the hand of his young deliverer, he put a small gold case into his hand, saying—"Generous, brave young man! I saw you rescue a father's dearest treasure; keep this for me, or rather keep it ever for my sake: you only deserve to possess the original."

The surgeon took the gentleman by the hand.—"My worthy friend," said he, "I must not allow you to talk, and agitate yourself; the fire will soon be got under, and your property saved. Come home with me.—And I hope, sir," added he, turning to Robert, "you will also walk with us, and partake of some
slight

slight refreshment, of which, I am sure, you must stand in need."

"Sir," interrupted the postboy, as he came up to Robert, "the packet will assuredly have sailed, if you losès any more time; the wind's as fair as it can blow, and you said how, sir, as your business was on life and death."

"It is indeed," replied Robert, as the sufferings of his friend rushed across his mind, and banished every other thought and pursuit. The surgeon and he exchanged cards, promising to see each other again, and Robert threw himself into the chaise, a prey to various sensations.—"Poor dying Lovemore!" said he to himself; "but oh, what a rencontre! and at what a time!" He comforted himself, however, with thinking, that he had done some good, and, if he tarried longer, if he waited till the next packet, to indulge in improving an acquaintance with the father of his beloved, his friend might be deprived of speech.

speech. Oh, horror! the very thought was agony—he might have ceased to exist! he therefore entreated the postilion to drive as fast as possible, and he arrived at Dover just as the packet was on the point of sailing.

Oh, how his eyes were continually rivetted on the miniature given him by the father of her whose semblance he had so long and ardently admired! It represented the head of the cherub looking down on the mercy-seat.—“Strange,” thought he, “though I have pressed that luxuriance of charms to my throbbing heart this last eventful night, I have not yet seen her eyes. The painter said they were very fine: her voice is melody. I hope she is not blind. I can, through the surgeon, as I come back, perhaps learn something more concerning this extraordinary girl, who has so bewitched me that I cannot think of any other female. I am afraid, Bob Butler,” continued he to himself,
“you

“you will grow a very vain fellow : here is the second handsome wife that has been offered thee in a very short space of time—for that Miss Fennel is handsome no one can deny ; but this offer I will not refuse , as to the other, how could I ever think of naming her and such an angel in the same sentence ?”

Arrived in Paris, Robert had the painful task of watching over the dying friend for whom, in spite of all his youthful errors, he felt the warmest regard. He saw him suffering a daily death, each moment of which became doubly excruciating in bodily torments. His mind, in spite of the opiates which were constantly administered to assuage his agonies, retained all its wonted strength and vigour to the very last. The tortures of deep repentance for his past faults, at first increased those that were corporeal ; but Robert, imbued with those firm principles of Christianity which are above the attacks of superstition.

stition and religious fear, spoke comfort to the penitent, by holding out to him the extent of heavenly mercy. Though the corporeal man still suffered, the mental man was consoled, and at peace with himself, while he prayed for, and forgave his murderer.

Robert, however, could not avoid saying to himself—"Let him not fall in my way!"—Divine Vengeance, however, never sleeps, and coward cruelty quickly meets its punishment; the ship foundered at sea, in which he had taken his flight, and the assassin alone, of all the crew, who were saved, perished.

Lovemore, ere he yielded up his last breath, recommended his faithful Timothy to the care of his friend, who promised, for the present, to retain him in his service, and afterwards provide for him, so that he should never want.

Lovemore gave a melancholy smile of satisfaction, and the unhappy victim of
his

his parents', and his own errors, expired,
in the arms of his worthy friend, at the
early age of four-and-twenty. " -

. CHAPTER II.

A Change of Scene.

FATIGUED, sick, and spiritless, Mrs. Underwood, who had accompanied her daughter into Scotland, on what the good lady, when she began to reflect, thought rather a wildgoose scheme, arrived in sight of land. Not so Miss Underwood; she was impatient to set her foot on the Scottish shore; she went like a hero to the conquest, and fancied herself sure of victory.

At Edinburgh she visited, with her mother, all that was curious and worthy the inspection of the traveller: well-informed as they both were, it may easily
be

be judged that they both highly enjoyed the antiquarian research. . At Holyrood they had first met with Mr. Hartfield and the lovely Margaret Macbane, who had never seen any of these wonders, not even in her own country. He was expatiating to the romantic girl, in somewhat of his old pedantic way; on the fleeting scene of youth, power, and beauty, when, suddenly turning his head, he beheld the lady to whom he had formerly paid his devotions, her Roman features towering over the delicate lineaments of the fascinating Margaret, who was contemplating, in silent sorrow and sweetly feminine reflection, all the relics belonging once to the ill-fated and imprudent Mary: we certainly hazard great censure from all the modern quacks by making use of the last term, which they, no doubt, will find too harsh, because it is the fashion to rake up all the old tombs of royal beauties, and to render those beauties complete models of

perfection, however indiscreet might have been their outward conduct, which was calculated to give rise to slanderous reports; and yet we find the same tongues declaring, in this refined age, that they believe all the coarse and horrible grossness detailed against a late illustrious character, but which will be energetic in the defence of all the frail fair ones of antiquity, born in a ruder age, if only a flattering Frenchman, with affected sentiment, declares them capable of "inspiring every man with love, and every reader of their history with sorrow †." Ah, they are no more! did they live now, envy and malevolence would be awakened; but pity and candour would both sleep.

Far be it from us to condemn the unfortunate queen of Scots, or her, who had

* *Vide* all the volumes of book-making farrago lately published, about the unhappy Scottish queen, and also madame Campan's adulatory panegyric on the perfection of character possessed by Marie Antoinette of France.

† *Vide* Brantome on Mary Queen of Scots.

had drank yet deeper, if possible, of the cup of sorrow, the late queen of France; but if these females were as their champions have painted them, they were patterns of perfection never yet found on earth. We are more generous; we pity Mary, with all her frailties—we love, we excuse her, because she was the creature of circumstances; we think her fate cruel, severe, and unjust; but it is folly and absurdity to call her innocent; her most impartial admirers are all agreed as to her imprudence. Mary, brought up in her earliest youth in a court famed for its profligacy, ill-treated by the husband she once loved, is entitled to pity, and to some extenuation of her conduct—for she was guilty of *more* than *imprudence*; and though Elizabeth had nothing to do with that, yet we verily believe, that while Mary lived, neither the person or throne of Elizabeth would have been safe. But, oh false generosity of sentiment! Women, with-

out any other motive than that of merely following the stream, half-read, half-educated, express their inveteracy to Elizabeth, to whom the English nation owes almost every thing, and are enthusiastic in their adoration towards the *Scottish* queen, while they refuse the tear of pity for one who lived in the remembrance of the most youthful of such summer insects, who are only fit, "to draw nutrition, propagate and rot." However, while the woman arrived at years of reflection knows how to draw conclusions from events, it is very natural for the young and enthusiastic to pity unfortunate beauty; but such alone will be tempted to believe every thing true that is written in the praise of its possessor. The writings of those historiographers who lived near their time, or who were eye-witnesses of the events of those times, are dry and wearisome; but they contain important truths, that flimsy readers will not be at the pains to search for.

for. Modern book-makers know better the flowery art of deluding the imagination, while they ensure their own profits, for delusion enchants every taste. .

Margaret Macbane read only these *soi-disant* candid historiographers, and pinned her faith on the wonders of their compilations, in which she found, also, if a woman's fate had in it any thing peculiarly interesting, if she was only agreeable in her person, her beauty was made out to be superhuman*.

We cannot help digressing when, like poor honest Fennel, we find writers trying to impose on us, and affronting our understandings by such quackery. We return now, in pity to our novel readers, to the party at Holyrood House.

Oh, how did the heart of Miss Under-
c 3 wood

* *Vide* the old story of a woman touching Mary, queen of Scots, *to feel if she was mortal!* This tale has served for two or three other *beautiful* queens, who, if we may judge by their portraits, were but a few degrees above ugly: vaccination was not then known: beauty is much cheaper, and less rare now.

wood flutter! and how did it beat with hope, at the deep blush her unexpected presence raised on the generally-pallid cheek of Mr. Hartfield! but even her lofty mien seemed to cower, when she beheld the rapturous looks he directed to Margaret, as he listened, with fond attention, to what was, in her, a kind and feminine interest, which she took in all that had once pertained to the Scottish queen, and what her hands, so beautifully described by Brantôme, had hallowed with their touch. How amiable is this womanish enthusiasm at seventeen! It matters not whether *dressing-boxes* were then in use, or not—one is shewn at Holyrood, as having belonged to Mary, and that is enough.

Mr. Hartfield accosted Mrs. Underwood and her daughter with somewhat of the familiarity of an old acquaintance; but the ease he endeavoured to assume sat awkwardly upon him nevertheless. What a troublesome thing conscience is!

is! he only knew what had been his intentions towards Miss Underwood, when he once thought he could not do better for himself than to take her for a wife; but as Mr. Hartfield really was a good young man (as, we before remarked, young men go, but not a wonder, as his friends had talked him and themselves into a belief of), so this inward monitor was very tender and tenacious, not having yet been "seared with a red-hot iron;" and he felt as if he had not treated Miss Underwood quite so well as he ought. He however recovered himself so far, as to address some flattering encomiums to the ladies on their good looks—doubted not, as he said, but that they would, like himself, be enchanted with Scotland, and allow, with him, that Edinburgh was one of the finest cities in the world. Alas! the good ladies had no such motive as he had to admire either the enchantments or the beauties of Scotland.

Just as Mrs. Underwood and her daughter were quitting this ancient monument of the former grandeur of Scotland's kings, they met a young officer, with whom Miss Underwood had been acquainted, and often danced with, at Brighton; and though she always elevated her noble nose above him, yet the heart naturally warms to an old acquaintance in a strange land.

"I think," said lieutenant Winton, after a few desultory remarks, "I have seen that gentleman," designating Hartfield, "with you in town."

Hartfield was just then leading out his lovely Margaret, and Winton, encouraged to familiarity by the kind and affable greeting he had received, continued to chatter, with a boldness that mortified Miss Underwood, and which any where else she would have checked with severity—but here he might be useful.—"What do you think," added he,

he, most provokingly, “ of Mr. Hartfield’s intended ?”

“ Oh dear !” said Miss Underwood, endeavouring to dissemble the mortification she felt, “ if a young man pays the least attention to a lady, she is always marked out as his intended.”

“ Yes,” said Winton ; “ and all ladies are not so cruel as Miss Underwood ;” the lady bridled—“ But this, I can assure you, is no gossiping report—it is really true ; the day, I believe, is actually fixed ; but the father, who is a baronet —”

“ How !” interrupted Miss Underwood, whose ears were always open to the sound of title—“ a baronet !”

“ Yes, madam,” resumed Winton ; “ but as poor as a rat.—Now my lady, his wife, whom he married purely for love, insists on a journey to London after the happy knot is tied, and this too accords with the wishes of the young lady, otherwise the bridegroom would

like best to make the tour of Scotland first, immediately after his marriage, and so return no more; whereas, if he goes to London first, he will have to come back again, for he is resolved to go all over Scotland; but he yields now entirely to female power. Sir Alexander Machane, the young lady's father, is determined, if possible, to stop the London journey altogether, for he cannot bear to be left in total solitude, and he is confined entirely to his home by an inveterate gout."

"You are just the same, Winton, as ever," said Miss Underwood, laughing; "wherever you go, you scrape up every one's private history: do you not remember how saucy I was to you at Brighton, when I used to listen to you, and tell you it was all you was good for?"

"Yes; and was not I always ready to kiss the hand that gave the blow?"

Winton, with the vanity natural to many a young redcoat, now thought the
reputed

reputed beauty looked on him with a favourable eye; however, he was resolved to pay her former scorn with indifference; and, turning to her mother, he said—"What did you think, madam, of Miss Macbane, the lady who was with Mr. Hartfield? she is reckoned quite a beauty here."

Mrs. Underwood, who could not bear to hear the person of any woman extolled when her beautiful daughter was by, whom she always looked on as the reigning belle of whatever circle she moved in, said, coldly—"I did not notice her sufficiently; she seemed tolerably pretty, but had nothing at all striking in her person: as to beautiful, I think her so far from it, that I should never look at her a second time;" here she cast a look at her dignified daughter, who, if other people thought her handsome, who could blame a fond mother for thinking her supremely so?

Miss Underwood gave a faint laugh,

in which mortification was very perceptible, and said—"I am really sick of the word beauty, it is generally so misapplied; the girl is not ugly, certainly, but I thought she seemed a poor, awkward thing; I should never have imagined she could have been the daughter of a man of title!"

"Oh, my dear lady!" said Winton, who was the son of a rich buckle-maker, at Birmingham, and therefore, though in the army, rather disposed to be radical, "some of these titled beings themselves are the awkwardest creatures in nature. But Miss Macbane cannot be called awkward; her only fault is her being enthusiastically romantic; while her father is a mere courtier, and her mother a downright matter-of-fact vulgar Scotch woman."

"Ah!" said Miss Underwood, turning to her mother, "I suppose Miss Macbane is something like Miss Fennel."

"I do

"I do not know the young lady you speak of," said Winton; "but Miss Macbane is a very accomplished and intelligent girl."

Oh, well' the lady I speak of is not at all accomplished, I believe; I only spoke of her romantic turn, for she almost worships the name of sir Walter Scott."

"There indeed she is like Miss Macbane," said Winton; "for she regards him as nothing less than an inspired person."

They had now reached the hotel where Mrs. Underwood and her daughter had taken up a temporary abode, till they could procure private lodgings, or travel farther, which was their design, if they had not so soon met the object of their pursuit. Miss Underwood had graciously taken the arm of lieutenant Winton, an action she would have disdained at Brighton, where she seldom noticed, by such distinguishing marks, any one less

less than a field officer; but here, she thought, she had found a beau, who would serve to mortify Hartfield, who cared not one straw how many she had; and she should also have a male chaperon to shew her all the lions in the north. However, the young man, who well knew Mrs. Underwood's economy, and had smelt out, with all the sagacity of a married man's son, that Miss Underwood had not the very handsome independence for which she was famed, resolved not to be made a tool of; and, on their application to him to be kind enough to look out for a small lodging for them, for about a fortnight or three weeks, the mischievous lieutenant said, he knew of one that would just suit them; it was very cheap, too—only five guineas a week! Mrs. Underwood thought, therefore, they had better remain where they were, especially as Miss Underwood, with some vexation, said she had seen enough of Scotland already, and she wished

wished she had not come; however, their stay would be but very short.

Winton then terrified them by a detail of the exorbitant charges of the hotels; so that the good ladies were almost afraid to open their mouths and shut them again, for the vulgar purpose of eating, and were absolutely in danger of being starved.

"While there is life, there is hope!" Miss Underwood was too good a young woman, as we said before, to do any one an injury; but stratagems are justifiable in love as in war: the gaining possession of a husband or of a town, so long as the male or female general are not, in either case, guilty of treachery, their manœuvring, in every way, to accomplish their purpose, is all fair.

Miss Underwood, therefore, manœuvred, by every means in her power, to recall, as she misnamed it, to herself the heart that, in fact, had never been hers; it was, indeed, a vain task she was undertaking;

dertaking ; the fortress had been already given up, and was now impregnable to every attack.

One, to her indeed, *black Monday*, she heard the fully authenticated news, that the following Thursday was fixed on for the marriage of William Hartfield, esquire, with the only daughter of sir Alexander Duncan Macbane, baronet. The very moderate bill at the hotel was settled in haste, and the mother, daughter, and ladies' maid, again set off, by steam, to join the rest of their family at Hastings. Thus ended the Underwood expedition to Scotland.

CHAPTER III.

Various Incidents.

WHEN Robert Butler had seen his friend quietly entombed in the Protestant burial-ground in the vicinity of Paris, and had arranged all necessary business with the guardians, who, at his request, had gone over, and arrived before the young man expired, he repaired immediately to town, meaning to join, as soon as possible, his father at Brighton.

He did not fail, however, to call on the friendly surgeon in his way to London; not going home by the way of Dieppe to Brighton, as was his intention, when he left home, before the eventful fire.

He

He was, however, disappointed in finding the surgeon from home, and his wife, as he thought, rather cool and taciturn in her reception of him : she positively refused to give him the smallest intelligence concerning the young lady and her father, only, that they had left the neighbourhood, and that the lady, as well as the old gentleman, were perfectly in health, and they had entirely recovered their fright, though, it was feared, at first, it would go very hard with the father. At length, after the lady's obstinacy in not giving their names, Butler said, with some impetuosity—"I am sure, madam, your husband would not withhold from me the means of paying my respects to a gentleman who made the professions he did to me, when I had the happiness of saving his life. I speak not, believe me, any ways boastingly of that; it was a duty I owed to the most indifferent, the most worthless of my species.—"

"I act, sir," interposed the good lady,

"in

“in concurrence with my husband : we both made a solemn promise to our two amiable guests, at their request, before we parted, that we never would inform you of their name, or place of abode. The gentleman said, that he knew not what had prompted him, or what he had said to you, in the enthusiastic gratitude of the moment ; but he recollected, very well, putting a trinket,* that he much valued, into your hand ; and he said to us—‘ Let him keep the bauble ; if he and I meet again, it is well ; but my daughter’s delicacy must not suffer, nor her blushes be excited, by a formal introduction ; it is very probable we may meet.’ He added, what I know to be a truth, that a more delicate-minded or more modest female does not exist than his daughter.”

“ This, madam,” said Robert, taking the picture from his bosom, “ is the trinket he is pleased to call a bauble, but which I denominate a valuable treasure.

sure. And oh, when he put this charming picture, into my hands, what did he not say !”

‘ Mrs. Johnston, the surgeon’s wife, looked slightly at it.—“ Yes; it is very like,” said she; “ but I am so used to see the original, all animation, that I never saw her head in that cast-down position: and then the hair is too light: I do not think that we poor dark-haired females will be shut out from heaven; but I do not know that ever I saw an angel or a cherub painted but what had fair hair.”

“ Really,” said Butler, with a faint smile, as he looked on the handsome countenance of the matron, and her dark, glossy ringlets, ill-concealed by the cap she wore—“ really I do believe that the young lady is blind.”

“ Why, what a guess you have !” said Mrs. Johnston, laughing.

Butler by her answer, however, could
not

not discover whether she was in jest or earnest.

“But, my good sir,” resumed she, “I do sincerely hope that chance may befriend you so far, as to bring about a meeting between you and that young lady; for I, who am at least old enough to be an aunt of yours, if not quite for a mother, will say, without flattery, that I think you and this charming girl were made for each other. As she is blind, you must be her guide through life; but do not attempt to get on what is called her *blind side*, for whatever may be the defects in her organs of vision, believe me, she will be acute enough to find you out.”

Robert, finding he could do nothing with Mrs. Johnston, rose to take his leave.

“My husband,” said she, “is gone to be present at a case, some miles off, that will keep him a night from home. I expect the carriage of a friend every minute,

minute, to fetch me out to dinner; but I beg you will command at our house, sir, as if it was your own; a dinner shall be prepared for you; and if you will accept of a bed, Mr. Johnston will be home early to-morrow."

Robert, however, declined this polite offer, as he found he should not be able to get any thing out of these obstinate folks; and he repeated his invitation, that, if any thing should bring Mr. Johnston, or her, to town, they would make his father's house their home; assuring her, that both he and himself would be extremely happy to see them, and that they were only going to pass a few weeks at Brighton; he then took his leave, better pleased with his reception than when he first entered Mr. Johnston's drawing-room.

After resting himself in town for one day, and writing to his father that he would soon be with him, the next morning he went to pay a visit to the painter.

—"Well,"

—“ Well,” said he, “ I know now who the lady is, who is represented in those two beautiful paintings that I have always so much admired.”

“ Have you seen her, sir ?” said the painter, with a deep blush.

“ Oh, yes, yes ! her name is——”.

The artist was staggered ; he rather doubted the truth of what young Butler uttered, and was silent.

“ Look here,” resumed Robert, shewing him the miniature.

“ Oh, yes, sir, I have seen that,” said the artist ; “ it is an excellent copy from my altar-piece. I recommended the miniature-painter to the young lady’s family, and they were highly pleased with this proof of his skill, it is so very like the original.”

“ Oh, it is the same as herself !” said Robert, “ and it is now mine—given to me, I assure you.”

“ Why,” said the artist, laughing, “ I do not suppose, sir, you stole it.”

“ No,

“No, no; Mr.——gave it me himself.”

How the picture came into the possession of Robert Butler rather puzzled the painter; and yet he did not think that he really knew who the lady was; and, as he had promised secrecy, he was resolved not to give any clue to the discovering of her, as he fancied Mr. Butler was only making use of subterfuge to find her out, as he could not pronounce her name.

“I say,” added Robert, “let me look at the Beauty Sleeping—that is my favourite.”

“Yes, sir, it is an excellent likeness, and makes a charming picture; but it was only lent me for a time, and it is gone home.”

“What! did you not take a copy?”

“I was taking one, sir,” said the artist, “but it was fetched away in a great haste.”

“Ah!” said Robert, “there is nothing perfect

perfect on earth! what a pity it is that this sweet girl should be blind! was she born so?"

The painter now discovered that young Butler had only been sifting him, as he before suspected, in order to learn from him who the lady really was; and he laughed heartily, as he replied—"No, no, the lady is not blind; she is as quick-sighted as I am, only her eyes are much finer than mine: I do not believe there is a more intelligent, or brighter pair of eyes in England."

"Then, I suppose," said Robert, "you thought of Shakespeare's Portia, and that was the reason you made this master-piece of Nature looking down, and asleep, and exclaimed, like your brother, painter—

—Her eyes!

How could he see to do them?"

Well, I find there is no getting hold of you; you are a rare secret-keeper; but

I will trace out the original of this cherub's picture, or I will perish in the attempt!"

The painter looked serious; but Robert was about to take his leave, rather in dudgeon, when, as he came near the door—"By Heavens," said he, as he looked on the half-length picture of a lady, "there is my little Scotch friend, Miss Fennel! Hang me, but she makes a devilish good picture! Ay, my good girl; be always as silent as that fair image, and I can bear to look at you; yet I should know that was Alice Fennel anywhere. How very handsome the lower part of her face is! I must venture to look well at her—that is, if she will hold her tongue—when I see her again: I love to look at a handsome portrait, but I had rather look at a handsome woman."

"I think," said the artist, "that the whole of Miss Fennel's countenance is
very

very fine, and she is a most desirable subject for our art; for her fine features have that pliability, which gives to them all that animated expression and combination of dignity, grace, and feminine sweetness."

"Why," said Robert, "you are as great an enthusiast as the lady herself; I hope you have not lost your heart to the romantic original—did you ever hear her talk?"

"Oh yes, sir! and her teeth are so very white and even, that I wished to take her speaking—especially as when she speaks there is a dimple just seen lurking in her left cheek, which adds much to her beauty."

"Oh, fair and softly, my good fellow!" said Robert; "Miss Fennel is a fine girl, but as to being *beautiful*, that she certainly cannot be called; but you artists are always *in alt*."

"Pardon me, sir, I think Miss Fennel *very* beautiful."

"Oh, I pardon you, with all my soul!" said Robert, laughing; "I shall not dispute with you, depend upon it, as to Miss Fennel's beauty; she will always be an object of too much indifference to me, though I wish the girl very well, for the sake of her worthy father."

The painter gave a very peculiar kind of shrug, which Robert knew not how to interpret, as he observed a sly and shrewd expression on the artist's visage. He turned again to look on the picture of Alice—"I swear the girl is handsome," said he, "and yet she is not flattered; but why did you not make her speaking, and discover a charm which is so attractive on a female's countenance? the dimple you spoke of; though, I declare, I never perceived it in Miss Fennel, when she has been uttering a pack of nonsense, for she never opens her mouth to speak any thing else."

"What you say is very likely," said the artist; "Miss Fennel, with
all

all her attractions of person, is, at present, to many perhaps, as well as to yourself, an object of indifference. *I* found, that, to take her, as speaking, would destroy the striking effect of the likeness, and, perhaps, spoil a good picture: neither am I fond of discovering the teeth at all in a portrait, as it generally imparts a silliness to the countenance, on which it is impossible to bestow life, though, certainly, the expression of Miss Fennel's remarkably intelligent eyes would destroy any appearance of simpleness."

"It is *very* like her," said Robert, again looking at the picture; "how long is it since you took this?"

"Very lately, sir; it is a present intended for Mrs. Howard; here is *her* picture, sir; but it wants a few more touches."

"Ah!" said Robert, advancing towards the painting, "Mrs. Howard is indeed beautiful! I do not know, among all my female acquaintance, a prettier

woman than Mrs. Howard." But as Robert contemplated her portrait, he said—"It is very extraordinary—she does not make near so good a picture as her sister."

"It is exactly as you say, sir," replied the artist; "those delicate, regular-featured women neither make good portraits, nor striking likenesses; that picture is not like Mrs. Howard; I never was more dissatisfied with any work that came from my pencil."

"Oh yes, it is like her," said Robert, "but it does not instantly strike you, like her sister's;" and after this conviction, Robert would certainly have felt cooled towards the fascinations of a beautiful picture, if he could ever banish from his heart and memory those rapturous feelings he had experienced, that delicious glow, when, in a moment of delightful agitation and surprise, he clasped the fair and youthful form, in all the pride of exuberant beauty, to his bosom—

bosom—the living original of the fair cherub before him, on which, while he fixed his ardent and enamoured gaze, he pressed still closer the miniature to his beating heart.

On his return home, he received a letter from his father, requesting him, before he came to Brighton, to call on Mr. Fennel, on some trifling business, concerning which he enclosed a letter.

Robert called, and had some pleasant conversation with the good man; but Alice did not make her appearance, nor did her father see her till they sat down to dinner.—“I am sorry,” said Fennel, “you would not come down when young Butler was here; he is going, as soon as his father will give him leave, which in my note I have urged him to do by all means, to take a voyage to Italy. Most probably, you will not have an opportunity of seeing him again before he goes.”

“Eh!” said Alice, reddening, “it’s

nae loss to him or me: I wish the chiel a gude voyage, but I wud nae desire to see him."

"You are a strange creature," said her father; "but you have ordered the dinner to be sent up very prettily, and I think you will make a very good wife: I have a husband in my eye for you, that you have never yet seen; but we will talk about that when we go in the country, and it is time we were gone."

"I nae wish to be married at a'," said Alice, her face crimsoned yet higher.

"Ah! that's all nonsense! you will change your tone, I know, when I present your future husband to you."

Alice burst into tears, and her father was obliged to pacify her, by telling her, he was only jesting.

Miss Southgate, whom we rather inhumanly left on a bed, which apparently was that of death, was at length pronounced not only out of danger,

ger, but in a complete state of convalescence. On her recovery, she gave her friend, Mrs. Rivers, a handsome new silk dress, and bestowed on her the most cordial thanks for her late kind and unremitting attention—that was all; she herself set off, with every comfort and accommodation, for the south of France, leaving Mrs. Rivers to shift for herself.

Mrs. Hannah Meredith, though she did not altogether admire the character of Mrs. Rivers, became, however, next to Mrs. Howard, her most kind and steady friend. Knowing well how to be “all things to all men,” the widow pleased Mrs. Hannah, by her social converse, by her constant good humour, her cheerfulness, and unaffected good sense. The good old lady found her a very pleasing companion, either for the friendly ~~talk & tête~~ or the small convivial party. Mrs. Rivers, too, was very active, and could materially aid Mrs. Hannah

in those morning walks which were taken for the purposes of benevolence, and which would often fatigue the true lady Bountiful herself. True, there was some little slur attached to the general conduct of Mrs. Rivers; but, at the worst, it was only spoken of as unguarded—and even this was undeserved—because the sprightly, yet erudite widow, had been heard openly to declare, that she preferred male to female society. Had she been rich, this declaration would have been styled amiable *naïveté*, and, perhaps, have been imitated: as it was, and more especially as the males all liked her, it was pronounced horrid.

Mrs. Hannah Meredith was extremely correct in her own conduct, and in the company she kept: she was at the same time most indulgent to others; she would say to herself, after uttering some kind and charitable excuse when she heard any one spoken slightly of—“Ah, I dare say, in my youthful days I have been

been slandered too; perhaps spoken of as one encouraging the addresses of a married man." I was too rich, and, consequently, too much flattered for such remarks ever to reach my ears." Mrs. Rivers, she would then think, might be as innocent of actual indiscretion as herself: her income, however, she knew was very scanty; hers was large, and she pitied her very much for having met with a false friend, who was still much richer, and for whom Mrs. Rivers had endangered her own health, and been unremitting in kindness and attention.

These reflections were followed by a cordial invitation to pass the summer with her at Harlow: Mrs. Rivers was then gone to pass a week with Mrs. Howard, who fully meant to have taken her with her to Cheltenham: Mrs. Hannah was, however, beforehand with her in the work of kindness, and she knew how to estimate properly, and to reward delicately, the good-tempered assistance

her new friend afforded her, who took off all fatigue from Mrs. Hannah when she had her little select parties, and rendered herself a most amiable and useful companion.

Before Mrs. Rivers quitted Mrs. Howard, she told her about the anonymous letter that Miss Southgate had written to Mr. Hartfield, and that Hartfield had shewed it to her, and said, that he was sure it was written by Miss Fennel; she said that she had affirmed to him that nothing could make her believe it, but at that time she had every reason to believe Miss Southgate was her true friend, and she could not tell him all she knew, and thereby betray her; but she thought, after her late treatment of her, she was justified in telling what she knew of the letter, thereby rescuing the young lady from the odium attached to her, for nothing Mrs. Rivers could say would convince Mr. Hartfield of Miss Fennel's innocence.

Though

Though Howard and his wife despised the action and the actor of it, yet they wished they had known it sooner, to have made her feel ashamed, if that were possible. Mrs. Howard told her sister, and was much surprised when Alice, with blushes, informed her, that Mr. Hartfield had accused her of writing to him a letter, filled with expressions of love. Mrs. Howard felt rather displeased at her sister's want of confidence in her, and began to think, by her change of countenance, and a tear starting in her eye, that she really loved Hartfield; but Mrs. Howard judged amiss, for poor Alice rather disliked him, and felt particularly hurt and mortified, whenever the recollection of his accusation crossed her mind.

In the midst of these trifling incidents, a suit of handsome apartments, ready furnished, was taken nearly opposite to Mr. Butler's, and at the door of this respectable lodging-house arrived a travelling

travelling post-coach and four, one morning, containing Mr. and Mrs. Hartfield, with their mother-in-law, lady Macbane, who had carried her point with her submissive husband ; and, on a seat behind, lounged the red-haired Sandy, in a new undress livery, by the side of a steady-looking quiet kind of footman, just such an one as Mr. Hartfield might be supposed to keep.

Mr. Butler's house was shut up, he being, with his son and men-servants, at Brighton. Mr. Fennel and his daughter had gone a few miles from London, in the pleasant county of Buckinghamshire ; and lady Macbane, at first, bitterly lamented that she was come *aw* that *muckle* way, to see the dear friends she *loo'd sae weel*, and now, *perchaunce*, she might *nae* see them at *aa*.

“ But you shall, dear mother,” said Hartfield, “ if we stay a twelvemonth here.”

..

“ Eh !

"Eh! an' yere a sonsie lad," said her ladyship, "an' I loo right weel that ye ca' me *mither*; I hope the lassie that is now yure ain gudewife will nae' say but what I ha' loo'd her, gif she were mine ain bairn."

"Yes, dear *mither*," said Margaret, affectionately kissing her cheek.

"Eh! what's the gude o' that, lassie?" said lady Macbane, her eyes suffused in tears; "gie me your bonnie mou."

Hartfield loved lady Macbane, with all her eccentricities, for her truly affectionate heart: the next morning, he heard the pleasing intelligence, that, in about a fortnight, at farthest, the three families that had been the grateful motives of lady Macbane's wishing again to visit London, would certainly be in town.

When that happy event arrived, she almost flew to her friend Fennel; and most cordially returned the kiss he gave her.—"Ah!" said she, "our friendship began

began wi' a breaking *doon*, but it ha' ended in a building up, an' there's the blessed chiel that ha' nae ainly bult up my 'coach, but mine hoose too: and we're now come to pass a week or tin days in your ain toone, and syne we ~~as~~ gang back, for the bonnie pair to journey through Scotland. Ah! waes me! when we part now, we may nae meet again i' this world."

Fennel entreated her ladyship not to speak of parting at such a joyful meeting; and Mrs. Howard, in the mean time, while Mr. Butler and Alice were conversing with the bride, took the opportunity of clearing her sister's conduct to Hartfield.

"Indeed," replied he, very politely, "I ought to have known Miss Fennel better, than to have imagined, for a moment, that she would be guilty of such an ungenteel piece of mirth; but I was deceived by the dialect, which was the same exactly as Miss Fennel adopted."

.. "Ah!

“ Ah, Alice !” said Mrs. Howard, “ see now ; why will you be so silly ?”

Alice felt rather displeased at her sister’s remark ; she, however, accepted a handsome apology from Hartfield, and peace was restored.

Alice had lately contracted a habit of blushing, whenever any gentleman spoke to her. Butler and Fennel, while she was conversing with Hartfield, exchanged looks, well understood of each other ; but poor Alice was often thought to be affected with what did not give her the smallest uneasiness.

“ Ah !” said lady Macbane, “ there is one yet wanting in this gude party.— Where’s the gamesome chiel, Butler, your ain son ?” and she turned to Mr. Butler, senior.

“ He is gone to Italy, my lady,” said Butler.

“ Eh ! an’ that fashes me sair,” said lady Macbane : “ ye wad hae done better

ter to marry him to that bra' sonsie lassie."

"I am sorry to say," replied Butler, "they do not like each other."

Alice blushed, and a tear hung on her long eyelash: she brushed it off, and said, with some degree of vexation—"Why am I to be teased about a person who cares no more for me than——" when, after a pause, she added—"than I do for him?"

"Oh, Alice!" said her father, with a look of reproach.

"Ah!" said lady Macbane, "I nae wonder at your glowering eyne: its nae very civil to speak i' that cankered sort, before the chiel's ain feyther, that loos the sonsie lad so weel; but, cheer up, lassie, ye may, perchaunce, ha' some right bonnie Scotsman, and that will tent ye better."

Lady Macbane then winked on the company, who all laughed heartily, and cheerfulness and unanimity were again re-

stored amongst every member of this good and happy family.

The tourists visited every place of public amusement, and had some delightfully social and convivial meetings at the several different dwellings of Fennel, Butler, and Howard, during the short stay of lady Macbane and her amiable daughter in town, with the enraptured bridegroom, who, with his lovely Margaret, took leave of his amiable friends, to be absent a few months, while he made with her the tour of Scotland.

CHAPTER IV.

A Scottish Hero.

ALICE and her father, after the departure of the happy pair and their mother-in-law, returned to enjoy the rural scene, at about ten miles distance from London; the time having been dreary and rainy during their previous sojournment in the country. Alice had become, in a great measure, weary of Scotch novel reading; she was often pensive, looked pale, grew thinner, and her appetite sometimes failed her: the father grew very anxious on her account; she must, however, he knew, be roused from this state of apathy; for this, thought he, is worse than
when

when she was almost mad with romance. He carefully, though with seeming negligence, left in her way all the works of the GREAT UNKNOWN, which she had before most admired; and he found the remedy a good one; for she began to read them over again, with even more avidity than at first; they *were* the first novels of this *hard-working* author; and they certainly are his best: she read them with more attention than she did before, and she discovered in them fresh beauties; which was more than her father could discover in her manners; nor was her outward appearance amended by her return to health, which had he not anxiously dreaded the decline of, he found her much more lovely and sweetly feminine when she looked less stout, and her features had acquired a very bewitching softness, as her cheeks appeared more pallid than usual, and a delicious kind of a languor swam in her fine eyes. Now, absorbed again in the delight.

light the Scotch novels afforded her, her native bloom returned: this rejoiced her fond parent; who, though he found her language often incomprehensible, yet he never checked her for it, but suffered her to go on as she pleased, though he often made a face from vexation, as if he was under the painful influence of a most desperate twinge of the gout. Alice watched his looks, and then the next sentence she uttered, and the next to that, were pronounced in very good English; but she soon relapsed into her favourite dialect; and her father, who had received an advantageous offer of marriage for her, that he thought, also, would not be disagreeable to her, now anxiously looked forward to the time when he should be able to introduce her lover.

At length, a letter arrived, with the Edinburgh post-mark, directed to Mr. Fennel.—“ Oh !” said Alice, eagerly, “ it comes,

comes, I dare say, from dear Mrs. Hartfield."

"No, my love, you are mistaken," said Fennel; "it is from a young man, who is son to a very particular friend I once had; he was an Highland officer, belonging to the forty-second regiment, in which this, his son, was born."

"Eh, feyther!" said Alice, "and ye ne'er tauld me ye had for your friend a bonnie highland mon."

"Did not I? Oh dear, yes; the father of this young man was as dear to me as Bob Butler's father is; and I wish you to prepare to meet his son, in one of your prettiest Scotch dresses; and I desire you will receive him graciously; for he is the man I intend for your husband."

"Sir?" said Alice.

"Madam!" said her father, somewhat sternly, "let me have no words. Have I not heard you declare that you never would marry any one but a Scottish hero? And I shall bring one to you, the son of
a dear.

a deal friend ; and one, who is, indeed, a hero. No one will ever dispute Duncan Macgregor's title to true heroism : he has been in *ninety regular fought battles ; and innumerable skirmishes.*"

" Eh !" said Alice, " he must then be mair than mon, or he's unco' auld."

" No, no, he is quite young enough for you ; and, on this head, Alice, I tell you, once for all, I expect to be obeyed : for my word was once given to his father, that his son should have one of my daughters : so put aside all this folly and coyness. Your lover is a soldier, plain spoken, brave, and sincere ; and, in this respect, Alice, as I told you before, I must, and will be obeyed."

Alice, her eyes overflowing with tears, now sought refuge in her chamber, and seating herself at the window, she thought not of dressing herself, but sat in a listless, and almost stupified state, till she was roused from it by the voice of her father, on the outside of the door,

vocife-

vociferating—"Well, are you dressed?"

"No," faintly articulated Alice.

"Come, come, be quick then. - Captain Macgregor writes me word, that he will be here as soon as his letter. I wish to speak a few words to you before he comes, that you may be prepared to receive him."

"Alas!" thought Alice, with a sigh, amounting almost to a groan, "I must then prepare myself to meet a man that I detest already, though I have never seen him; but he is forced upon me, and that is sufficient to make me hate him, particularly at this time, when I am more than ever desirous of leading a single life. *Ninety regular fought actions!*—what a number the wretch must have killed! For himself, he cannot have escaped without being disfigured; I dare say he is just such another fright as that Macdougall I once danced with. How different are all the Scottish warriors my fancy has drawn, from the ideas

I have received from the most enchanting writer in the world!"

A violent ringing at the gate alarmed her, in the midst of her soliloquy: unfortunately, the chamber windows did not look out on the court before the house; and she durst not go into their sitting-room on the same floor, for fear of meeting the formidable hero, with her clothes half on and half off: she therefore hurried over her toilet, and her agitation imparted a beautiful glow to her fine clear complexion.

Amongst her exuberant ringlets she twisted some artificial heath blossoms, and sighed bitterly to think her heart was not so tranquil as it was when at the time she purchased them: she had a silk dress, which had lately been made for her, that she had never worn but once—it was the forty-second plaid; and she thought to disarm her father's anger (for she had heard him again, very loud at her chamber door, asking, why she
was

was not dressed), by putting this dress on, in compliment to the Scottish chief.

When she entered the drawing-room, Fennel, whom anger very ill became, sat, looking any thing but handsome; and the hero, oh, Heavens! what a figure! Alice, between two such, looked like some beautiful being, just dropped from some higher sphere, amongst ugly mortals.

The form of Duncan Macgregor was fine, martial, and not too tall: he was well made, but Alice did not like to see his bare knees, and thought that part of the Highland dress, or rather *undress*, was extremely indelicate. Oh, how charming descriptions read in books of warlike Gallic chiefs! See them in reality, and they scarce appear a degree above barbarians.

Now, Macdougall, she recollected, though he danced with her in the full Highland costume of his regiment, had on, nevertheless, underneath his kilt,

flesh-coloured silk stocking pantaloons. As to the coarse savage before her, she felt assured, in her own mind, that she should hate him ; and her blushes rose higher, as she ventured to steal a glance at him : he had but one arm, and on one foot was a large clumsy shoe, because the toes had been recently cut off, as she afterwards learned, and the stuffings and bandages ; which she was told, were requisite to keep the other part of the foot firm, and to enable him to walk ; which, to her great surprise, he did very well, for he was striding about the room, in no very graceful manner though, it must be confessed, when she entered, and was just then taking, with his right hand, for happily it was the left arm he had lost, a most capacious pinch, or rather handful, of snuff, from a horn that hung to his breast. A piercing dark eye, for he had but one, looked at her, from under an overhanging eyebrow, as red as a fox. Such a creature, thought she

she to herself, is only fit to be kept for fighting. On the place where the other eye had been, was a large green patch; and another black one on the left side of his nose, which had been part shot away; what was seen remaining of the nose looked as if it had been handsome. Over his upper lip were long, fiery, red mustachios: we cannot say we believe these fierce-looking appendages, introduced among us from the warriors of Russia, Prussia, and Germany, at all classical to the truly martial dress of the forty-second regiment; but Duncan Macgregor thought them warlike, and therefore he adopted them.

These red mustachios were the colour of his head of hair, which was bushy, and stood out in all directions, under a Scotch bonnet that was never taken off: part of his chin, like his nose, had been shot away, and was supplied by a thin plate of tin or silver, over which hung a black silk curtain.

He advanced towards Alice, with the above-mentioned mustachios plentifully laden with snuff, for he took it in such a slovenly way, that he wasted more than he received ; and in a queer kind of tone, in the broadest Scotch she had ever heard spoken, even by lady Macbane herself, he said—"Ah, my bonnie Alice ! an I maun pri your bonnie mou."

He was about immediately to imprint a kiss on her coral lip, when she uttered a loud and piercing shriek, and ran to her father for protection.

Fennel, with forced gravity, said—"Alice, I am ashamed of you : ought you not to know, with all your reading, and with all you have been taught, that the customs of different countries differ also from each other ? and the kiss was offered you, in pure friendship, according to the custom of that of captain Macgregor."

"I do not like the smell of snuff," said
Alice,

Alice, turning away her head from the figure before her.

“ You are rude, Miss Fennel,” said her father. “ Go up to the brave man you have offended, and ask his pardon; welcome him yourself with a kiss of hospitality, and hearty welcome.”

“ Oh, sir, you are cruel !” said she, bursting into tears; and the single eye of Macgregor expressed wonder, as to what he could possibly have done amiss, while he said—“ Bonnie Alice, I wad nae fash thee; to pri the bonnie mou of a sonsie lassie is the way o’ mine ain country.”

“ Sir !” said Alice, indignant at the stranger’s freedom, in calling her simply by her Christian name, “ I do not wish to follow the customs of *your* country.”

“ No, indeed !” said Fennel—“ here is a change ! True woman, true woman ! However, recollect yourself; you once told me, if you could find another Rob

Roy, you would abjure the foolish resolution of living single."

"Oh, my dear father!" said Alice, weeping, "you were never used till now to treat me thus, nor to speak, in any way, slightly of my sex: why then adopt this conduct before one who is an utter stranger to me?"

"Bonnie Alice!" said Macgregor, with a faltering voice, "it gars mine heart sick to see tears i' thine eyne. Comfort thee, lassie, an tak' tent; I wull nae wrong thee, nor shall my lip touch your bonnie mou, gin ye nae consent."

Alice was somewhat softened, as she thought she discovered some generosity in this speech; but yet she trembled like a leaf, and clung closer to her father.

"Alice," said Fennel, "I expected you would have been truly rejoiced to see a true and lineal descendant of Rob Roy Macgregor."

"Indeed!" said Alice, regarding the stranger with some interest, but involuntarily

luntarily shuddering as she again withdrew her looks; and she found herself unable to finish the sentence she had begun.

"Yes, my girl," said Fennel, "there he is descended in a direct line from that hero of heroes, of whom you once declared, that if such an one now lived, you should envy Helen, his heroic wife; and, if he were single, be tempted to marry him yourself."

"Sir, pardon me," said Alice; "I believe you have added the last part of my declaration: I know, I said I should envy the warlike Helen Macgregor; and, even had I spoken the latter sentence, I might have done it with safety; to the single state I am resolved on, for where is a Rob Roy to be found?"

"Why, you would not rake his bones from his mother earth, would you?" said Fennel, with a smile; "a living *man*, trust me, is better than a dead lion. There stands his lineal descendant; from
E 5
father

father to son, a Macgregor, from their first ancestor Rob Roy. Give him your hand, I say."

"As your friend, sir," said Alice; "never in the way you have commanded me."

Macgregor again advanced to her.

"Give him your hand, I command you," said Fennel, sternly; "and give it him now, as you wish it," added he, in a milder tone, "merely in friendship; when you come to know each other better, I do not fear but what that friendship will ripen into love."

Alice, while she shook her head, timidly presented her hand: the hero held it firm, though he pressed it gently: he looked stedfastly on that plump little hand, which, if not remarkable for the dead whiteness of an idle hand, was, nevertheless, moulded by the graces.—
 "Ah, that hond!" said he, and he pressed it to those lips that could not be seen, for his over-hanging mustachios,
 with

with all the fervency of passion. • Alice made a grimace, indicative of distaste, and took her cambric pocket-handkerchief, to wipe the back of her always clean, pretty little hand.

For a few days after the arrival of Macgregor, whom her father seemed actually to idolize, she was a most miserable creature: the stranger's attentions towards her increased, and extremely distressed her: her father's conduct was so different to what it ever had been, that she knew not how to account for it—she, who generally had been accustomed to do, to go, wherever and whatever she pleased, now saw no society but that of the hideous Macgregor—she, whom her father ever used to consider his fairest ornament, when he had company, would now hear him laughing, after she had gone to rest, at even an earlier hour than ever she had been accustomed to: she did not think much of that, as her health had not been so good lately as

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heretofore; but then, as we said before, she often heard such loud laughter between her father and the hateful Macgregor, after she had retired to rest, that she knew not what to make of it, unless her father was triumphing in her vexations, and that, she could never be brought to believe. Then again, she would hear the voice of men she was sure she had heard before; then she would hear, grating on her ears, Macgregor's hateful Scotch dialect, which she now abhorred, much as she had loved it before; then her own name frequently repeated, and peals of laughter, both from her father and the Highlander; but she was so convinced, one night, about eleven o'clock, of the identity of a voice she had once heard before, and it was uttering the softest, sweetest, and most generous expressions, that she huddled on a wrapping-gown, and crept to the door of the sitting-room; when she was suddenly stopped by her maid, Betty, who,

who, uttering a loud scream, said—"Oh crimini, Miss! do you walk in your sleep? I will call my master."

"No, no! dear Betty Clarke, pray do not: I am awake; indeed I am."

"Oh, well; come, Miss, now I does believe you be in your right senses, now you doesn't call me Betty *Boodle*."

"Oh, no, no!" said Alice, sitting down on her bed, and sobbing bitterly—"I never will call you Betty Boodle again; I hate the name; I hate every thing that is Scotch."

"What is all this screaming been about?" said Fennel, as he just opened the door, a little way. "What are you crying for, Alice? and who was it screamed? Is any one hurt?"

"La, sir! I doesn't scarce know," said Betty; "mayhap Miss see'd a spider."

"No!" said Alice, who scorned to tell an untruth; "but, my dear sir, you and your company really made such a noise in the drawing-room, that I could not sleep;

sleep; and hearing my own name frequently mentioned, I was blameworthy enough to think of listening to hear what you said of me, when Betty caught me, just as I got to the door, and saved me from committing so mean an action. Dear father, forgive me."

"That I will, my noble girl," said he, giving her a hearty kiss, "for your strict adherence to truth, which I never knew you to violate. God bless you! Fear nothing that can be said of you in your absence; it will never be to your disadvantage; and I think, and hope you are above the foolish vanity of standing, not half dressed, to listen to your own praises: we will not be so noisy again.—See my daughter safe in bed, Betty, and take away her candle."

As soon as Fennel had retired.—"La, Miss," said Betty, "what a fine spoken man master is sometimes! and yet, at others he's as plain and downright as ever my own father is; but just now,
dang

dang it, if he did not talk just for all the world like one of the player^s-men ; and made the water come into mine eyes, whether I would or no.—But what a rum sort of a shattered thing that Scotch soldier officer is, Miss !”

“ I believe,” said Alice, “ he is a very good man.”

“ Oh yes, Miss ; he does a world of good, I’m told.”

“ I am very glad of it,” said Alice, pretending to be very sleepy. “ There, take away the candle ; and do take away those Scotch novels, and put them in the bookcase to-morrow morning, after you have dusted it ; I am quite weary of them.”

CHAPTER V.

Growing Friendship.

IN a very short time, Alice began to be accustomed to the rueful appearance of Rob Roy's warlike descendant. He, eager to prevent her every wish, won her esteem, by attentions the most delicate; and often manners the most refined would peep out from the rude customs he had imbibed, seemingly in a state of continual warfare and privations.

Yet Macgregor pestered poor Alice incessantly, with those professions of firm and unchanging love, that gave her much uneasiness: however, after finding
in

in him many excellent qualities; with abundance of good sense and candour, she told him one day, that if he would accept of her friendship, which was all she ever could bestow on him, it was his own; but, if he insisted on her receiving him as a lover, she was resolved never to have any farther communication with him.

“ Oh, Alice,” said he, “ before I understood right weel thy gude character and noble mind, I might have ta’en tent for that cauld gift thou offerest; but he wha knows my bonnie Alice as I do, must loo her weel and for ever.”

‘They were walking in the garden.—
“ Then we part,” said she, hastening her footsteps to the house: “ I will instantly tell my father my settled resolution, never to behold you more.”

“ Oh, Alice, Alice!” said Macgregor, “ nae mair will I speak to thee on love, if that fash thee so sair; but dinna tak frae mine ain poor single eye the winsome,
some,

some joy o' seeing thee. Tak not from my well pleased lugs the sweet sound of thy voice, nor let them lose the honi'd accents, full of gude sense, and words o' kindness to a'."

Alice blushed at his praises, and entreated him not to overrate her merits, for flattery would never win her.

He replied that he scorned it, nor would he praise even her at the expence of truth; that no doubt but what she had some foibles; and, as for himself, he was sensible that he had many faults, and if, as she had promised to be his friend, she would but reprove him for whatever she saw amiss in him, he would be obliged to her, and would endeavour to amend it.

She promised, and a friendly compact was entered on between them: they rambled together over the rural scene, and Alice grew more and more delighted with her sensible and well-informed companion: though she could not understand

derstand more than the half of what he uttered, yet that half was sufficient to convince her of his amiability, and also of his being in possession of many acquirements, which made her wonder how he could find leisure, possibly, to cultivate, engaged for ever, as he always had been, in wars and fighting.

She learnt much from him, and he had a method of teaching which rendered his instructions pleasing and easy. She grew ambitious of becoming an accomplished woman, and made great improvements, in the attention she paid to her new master, in geography, drawing, and the scientific part of music, which she had too much neglected, by depending on a nice and excellent ear. Thus she was incessantly employed with Macgregor, and even in the hours of relaxation she never felt easy out of his company.

Her father, from whom she carefully concealed the compact of friendship
made

made between her and Macgregor, seemed at the very summit of earthly happiness. Alice would often sigh, when alone, to think, that, perhaps in a very short time, all his joy would be overthrown, when he should hear her settled resolution, and the agreement she had prevailed on Macgregor to come into : her heart would smite her when her father would say to her—" Well, my Alice, you see now, I hope, what a fleeting flower is beauty ! It gives me a delight I know not how to express, that you are, at length, become sensible to the merits of young Macgregor, in spite of his outward appearance."

" Oh yes, my dear father, I esteem him and value his character far above all that I have ever seen among the gentlemen that you or my brother, Mr. Howard, have yet introduced me to."

Here the face of Alice was suffused with a rosy blush, but recovering herself, she added—" Captain Macgregor
has

has but one fault, but, in my estimation, it is almost a heinous one: I find him stingy; he does not love to give away. I am told, however, that is a fault belonging to all of his country."

"Now, Alice," said Fennel, "you make me more angry with you than when you were inclined to think that the Scotch were all perfection. Trust me, my girl, there is neither perfection of character nor particular vice attached to poor mortals from the country they may chance to be born in. The Scotch are a prudent people; but there are many, very many amongst them, renowned for hospitality and generous deeds. Who, of whatever nation he may be, will you find more shy than an Englishman? He loses daily still more, of what he has long lost, his ancient title of hospitable; for he does not set before all comers his frugal fare, and bid them welcome to partake, like the honest Highlander, who gives his accidental guests, with

with hearty cheerfulness, his oat cake and bowl of milk : that is genuine hospitality, which does not preside over the costly formal dinner, fixed three or four days at least beforehand, and where, from a multiplicity of dishes, one may run a chance of being poisoned with French ragouts and such modern quackery. Numerous too have been our misers ; and I do not think that Scotland ever produced an Elwes or a Dancer. I do not desire you should be any thing but an Englishwoman ; but learn to be more liberal concerning the natives of other countries, and less vain of your own."

Just at that moment, Betty came in, with—" Las, sir ! I cannot get that poor woman as lives at the top of the lane away from the gate ; she cries, and takes on so, and says, how she will and must see the ugly Scotch soldier-officer, for she is sure he is an angel dropt down from heaven. I could not help saying, then

then angels are not such pretty creatures as I thought; howsomever, •I ax'd her what made her cry so; and she said she cried with joy: now I never did sitch a thing in ail my born days; but I suppose how I never had enough of it," added Betty, with a laugh.

"Go, my dear," said Fennel to his daughter, "and see what the poor woman wants. tell her captain Macgregor is gone out on some business, and will not be back till evening.

Alice almost flew to the gate, and entreated the woman to tell her if there was any thing she or her father could do to serve her, and if she was in want of any thing.

"Want, Miss!" said she, "I believe I shall never want again! Oh, Miss, you and that good gentleman—if it had not been for you, about three days ago, giving me all that silver, my poor children and myself, I am sure, would have famished: but him! oh, Miss! as soon

as,

as you went home, then he came ; and, poor *wounded* gentleman, his one eye wept—ah, Miss, bitterly—and he held his handkerchief all over his face, and fairly sobbed at seeing our miscry. You and your good father have been very good indeed to me ; and if I had had any thing tidy to put on, I should have come and thanked you long ago : but now, I have seen you, and I have nothing more to ask, but to let me see that good man, the Scotch officer, that that I may thank and bless him, and assure him that I will pray for him night and day ; I would not have made so bold as to have come, but I have never set eyes on him since he has been so bountiful to me.”

“ I really did not know you again, Mrs. Burrows,” said Alice, “ you look so neat and well dressed.”

“ Ah, blessings on the dear gentleman, I shall never go in rags again !”

“ And

“And your children?” Alice began to inquire.

“Oh, Miss, they are fed and clothed for a long time to come—I might almost say for life.”

Alice, finding herself an object of attraction to two or three equestrians, who were riding that way, said—“Step into the parlour, Mrs. Burrows; my father will be as glad as myself to hear of your good luck.”

The grateful creature then informed Mr. Fennel and his daughter, that the kind captain had got her two sons into the very excellent charity-school of that parish, after paying for their clothing; that he had given her a cow, a pig, and some poultry; furnished her poor miserable hut, and ordered it to be well thatched and thoroughly repaired; clothed herself and her little girl comfortably, paid the arrears of her rent, and bought the cottage for her of her unfeeling landlord, and the little kitchen-garden,

the poor produce of which had for some time been her sole support: he found, also, that a little paddock might go along with the premises, only it was not to be supposed that she could purchase it: Macgregor, however, bought it, and gave it her, for the cow to graze in: he also gave the poor widow twenty pounds, to begin the world with again. —“ Oh, I am now rich indeed !” added she, “ nor am I the only one this excellent man has benefited; I believe soon there will not be a poor person in the village; I am sure there will not, if they make a proper use of his bounty: but he does not wish to have what he gives talked about; he loves to do good in a quiet sly way like: ah! he'll have his reward in heaven!”

“ That he will, that he will, my good woman,” said Fennel, his eyes swimming in tears.—“ Ah, my Alice—happy, happy girl !”

Alice blushed like scarlet.

“ Yes,

“ Yes, sir, Miss is happy,” said the poor woman, not comprehending him; “ she is in looks, and deeds too, like an angel; but the poor gentleman is a proof that many very ugly people may be very good indeed, and I have often found it so.”

Fennel knit his brows.—“ Come, come, good woman,” said he, “ let us have no flattery; my daughter is verv well: as to captain Macgregor being ugly, he was not so naturally; it is the wars that he has been in that have so disfigured him: a fine made man though!”

“ Oh, very, sir!” said Mrs. Burrows: “ and oh, sir, you have, as well as Miss, been very bountiful to me; but still, with all that you gave me, after the death of my husband, I got so dreadfully behindhand, I was two years in *rears* to my landlord; and my poor children sometimes could not get a meal for a whole day, and, therefore, what I got from charitable gentlefolks, like

yourselves, often all went to buy victuals for the poor famished little creatures; and I really thought we should all have starved at one time."

"I wish *I* had known this before," said the good Fennel.

"Ah, sir! but when the great folks belonging to the place do not trouble *themselves* much about us, how can we expect that *temporary* visitors, like you and the captain, would do such great things for us!"

"Come, Mrs. Burrows, you shall drink the captain's health," said Fennel, pouring out a glass of wine.

"Ah, sir!" said Mrs. Burrows, wiping her eyes with her new checked apron, "I have never tasted a glass of wine since my wedding-day.—Well, sir, here is God for ever bless captain Macgregor, and send him, and you, and Miss, all the happiness he desires here! I am sure he will be happy hereafter, or else nobody will."

The

The woman afterwards, with many courtesies, and many thanks, took her leave.—“And this is the man,” thought Alice to herself, “that, a few days ago, sternly refused to give the poor bare-footed ragged children of this grateful creature the least relief! I think I hear now ‘not a *barbee*—nae, not ane *plack*!’ yet, when he lectured me for giving them all the change I had, how kindly, and how wisely did he point out to me the folly of giving indiscriminately! nay, he almost, in his clever, wise and unanswerable way, proved to me that it was a vice, because it robbed those who were industrious, and modestly concealed their poverty: he never gave, he said, to beggars; they were, he constantly declared, in general, the worst idle burthen on a nation, and often thieves where they could find an opportunity: they always refused the offered good of charitable institutions, preferring to live in rags, dirt, and idleness. ‘Beggary,’ he used to say, ‘would soon end, if no one gave.’”

Macgregor, however, plainly saw, that the half-famished children of the poor widow were real objects of compassion, and the poor little creatures had run begging to Miss Fennel and her admirer, without the knowledge of their mother, whom he took care immediately to find out and relieve, though he had declared before Alice, that he would neither give them, "*plack* or *barebee*."

Alice, delighted at what she had heard of the real benevolence of Macgregor, welcomed him, with that visible delight, on his return in the evening, that though, at first, he seemed enraptured, he soon sunk into a very serious and melancholy mood, which much affected Alice. She redoubled her attentions to him, and they seemed only the more to distress him. He pressed her hand, as she bade him good night, and he said—"Ah, Alice! thou lovest me not; I know thou canst nae loo me. Ah! wae me that ever I beheld thee!"

"My good Macgregor," said Alice,
 "I adore

“ I adore your virtues ; you deserve all the affections of a heart that is better able to appreciate your worth than mine is.”

“ Fare thee weel, Alice,” said Macgregor ; “ may the gude spirit watch o’er thee !” He then heaved a sigh as if his heart was breaking.

“ Come, come,” said she, “ you forget that you and I are to walk to-morrow to see the vicar’s famous garden : it is too far for my father—he will go on horse-back. We must have no sighing and dismal countenances at the vicarage, for you know that all the family there are the most happy and cheerful in the world. Oh ! I am quite angry with you,” added she, affecting to be more sprightly than she felt ; “ I desire you will make yourself smart : I shall smooth down those bushy locks of yours ;” and she playfully attempted to put her hand on the side of his head.

“ Ah ! touch not my locks,” said he ;

“ a powerful charm is attached to them, and they munna be kempt till a beautiful damsel shall consent to gie her hond in marriage to Duncan Macgregor. It is my care to do a’ I can to ’tent thee: and turn thine cyne, Alice, to that packet on yon chair; it haulds the stocking, pantaloons I mean to don, when i’ thy presence, as thy gude feyther tells me thou likest not my savage gear.”

Alice endeavoured to smile, but she seemed to have caught the melancholy of Macgregor, and she parted from him with a tear in her eye.

“ So, then,” thought she, as she laid her head on her pillow, “ all is not fable that we read of in Scotch romances: I am sorry my father was not in the room when he spoke of the charm attached to his uncombed hair: his well-educated friend, Macgregor, believes in the infallibility of charms; and though, as our intimacy began to increase, he reproved me, for what he called dangerous enthusiasm

siasm in my great partiality for Scotch novels, yet, does not he constantly employ the language spoken of old, and has his intercourse with other nations in the least altered his northern accent? yet he blames me for attempting to imitate it, and he is right: I find the truth of what Mrs. Hannah Meredith told me once, that one who is not a native of Scotland, in endeavouring to speak like one born and bred there, only renders herself ridiculous. Oh, Macgregor! excellent man! would to Heaven I was worthy of you! and, with all your personal defects, I wish I could love you, as such a worthy man ought to be beloved!"

Here a gentle sigh heaved her bosom; and this moment of softness was followed by a firm resolution to confide a secret to Macgregor; to which every one was a stranger but herself.—“He is generous,” thought she—“his mind is delicate—and from the generosity of a man of his nature I have every thing to hope.”

In this train of thought she fell asleep, and her dreams were of such a nature, that, when she awaked, she was more fixed in her determination than before she closed her eyes.

Macgregor, who little thought of the important secret that was now on the eve of being intrusted to him, appeared in the breakfast-parlour as neat and clean as possible; his mustachies, hair, and eyebrows, shone like burnished gold, and yet they were frightful to look on, by reason of their rufulent colour.

Alice could not help thinking of Sandy, lady Macbane's footboy.—“ Oh,” thought she, “ if Scotchmen have all such heads, how I should dislike their persons !” She thought it very strange, however, that so young a man should have such long hair on his eyebrows, which almost overshadowed an eye naturally fine and expressive; but she was pleased to see that he had on a beautiful pair of silk pantaloon stockings, under
his

his kilt; and that she had not seen the horn of snuff that used to hang at his breast for several days.

Love is said to be the parent of love; but, alas! it could here only produce gratitude, and the truest friendship, in the heart of Alice. She felt sure, that she so much esteemed Macgregor, that she could willingly hazard her life to do him service; but she never could be brought to call him husband.

"Thou art glum this morning, my sweet Alice," said he, as she walked beside him in their way to the vicar's garden—she full of the confidence she was about to place in him, and planning twenty different ways of beginning; and though this mighty secret chiefly related to the single life she had resolved on, yet, to put a stop to his professions of love, she must tell him the reason that determined her on leading a life of celibacy, and this caused great agitation in her mind, the native modesty of

F 6

which

which tied her tongue, and made her cheeks glow with the deep tints of the damask rose : her eyes were cast down ; and as Macgregor gazed on her, he said —“ Thou art more fair and beautiful, sweet Alice, than the gowans that so plentifully besprinkle this verdant mead ; but they fade, my Alice, like the pleasures o’ this life—even thy beauty, Alice, must fade also ; but——”

“ Oh yes, certainly !” interrupted she, vexed just then at the remark, because he spoiled the speech she was preparing ; and the subject she had to treat on made her rather averse to think of *fading* so soon as a field flower.

“ Yet,” continued he, “ Macgregor, Alice, would loo thee in sickness, and in age ; *he* would adore thee, when a’ thine outward charms were gone for aye.”

“ Oh, sir ! I wish I could love you as you desire, and as you deserve to be loved ! I am unworthy, sir, to be your wife.”

“ Ah,

“ Ah, Alice! why so cauld? ca’ me not sir—ca’ me your ain Macgregor.”

“ I will not deceive so good a man, so dear a friend. Oh, Macgregor! I will ever be your friend—but I can be no more: what would you do with a divided heart—you, that ought to have its whole affection? Macgregor, I must confide a secret to you; when you hear it, you will pity me—and I think you will no longer persecute me with your professions of love. I feel for you, because I have fixed my affections where they are hopeless.”

“ Alice,” said Macgregor, “ wouldest thou ha’ me dead?” and he prepared to listen, in breathless agitation: while Alice prefaced her “ short, unvarnished tale,” with the word—“ gratitude.” On seeing, however, the strange effect this relation had upon her lover, who stood transfixed, like one thunderstruck, her own emotion amounted to a temporary frenzy; she essayed to seize the dirk that
that

that hung at his side, crying out on *the mercy of God*, Mordaunt, lady Helen, king James, Martha Trapbois, and Heaven knows what.

Macgregor seated her beside a limpid brook that ran near—he threw some of its reviving water in her face, and chafed her temples with some Eau de Cologne that he found in a bottle in her reticule.

“Ah!” said she, when she came to herself, “what have I done? what will my father say, if you should tell him what I have confided to you?” and she wept bitterly.

Macgregor pressed her head to his bosom, and she felt his heart beat with such violence against it, that it seemed ready to burst its habitation.—“I have been cruel,” thought she to herself; “if I could not love him, why pain him by telling him I loved another?” *

When the agitation of Macgregor would allow him to speak, he said—
 “These tears, my Alice, will relieve thee.

thee. And now, dear lassie, take 'tent—hear me, while I swear,” and he knelt down, stretching forth, in a solemn manner, his only hand towards heaven—“By that o’erruling Power,” said he, “who kens our inmost thoughts, nae living mortal shall hear the secret that Alice Fennel has tauld to me, except frae her ain lips! I have aspired to her love—a happiness too great for sic a mon as me. He wha ha aince loo’d Alice Fennel, can nae loo anither female: but, after this day, she wull see Macgregor nae mair.”

“Oh, say not so, dear Macgregor!” said Alice; “do not desert me—be still my friend—we cannot help our fate!”

“I will ever be thy friend,” said Macgregor; “but the last descendant of Rob Roy will retire to his native mountains; absent, or present, Alice, I am, till death, thy friend; but thou shalt see Macgregor nae mair; my vow is registered on high!”

Alice

Alice would now have given worlds, if she had been possessed of them, that she had still kept her secret in her own breast.

They walked on in silence to the vicar's garden, where an elegant dinner was prepared in a beautiful summer cottage.

Macgregor made himself truly agreeable, though Alice knew, within herself, that his spirits were all forced. Her father, however, seemed to catch his hilarity, and was one of the most gay among the lively party : but Alice was languid, *distract*, and, at times, so distressed, that the tears seemed ready to start into her eyes ; she pleaded headach, slight indisposition, and all she could think of, while she endeavoured to rally her spirits, in return for the unremitting attention she received from the good vicar, his wife, and their amiable daughters.

“ Ah !” thought Alice, “ my father little imagines what are poor Macgregor's

gor's sufferings, nor how soon we shall lose him!"

When they had arrived home, and were all retiring to rest—"Alice," said Macgregor, "wilt thou nae let me prie thy bonnie mow aince before we part—and that," added he, in a whisper, "for ever?"

"Oh yes!" said she, and she pressed her ruby lips to his rough mustachios; but she felt no disgust—tender pity had triumphed over fastidiousness, and she wept, though she blushed not. She was resolved, if possible, to see him before he went, the next morning; and rising very early, she dressed herself, and went down into the parlour, through which she knew he must pass to go out.

She only found Betty there, who was dusting the room, and who said to her—"Las, Miss, you ha' got up main early this morning! I hope master is not coming down though yet?"

"Not that I know of," said Alice;
"and

“and I am sure I am up the first of the three;” and she looked anxiously towards the door that opened into the other apartment.

“No, Miss,” said Betty, “begging your pardon, as you always told me to say, whenever I contradicted any one; begging your pardon, as I said before—but the one-eyed, one-armed captain has been gone almost these two hours; he ordered the *posse-chay*, directly as you came home last night, to be here at five *purciscly*. Only look, Miss! he gave me this golden sovereign, for my trouble as he called it; I am sure it was a pleasure to do any thing for him, he was so civil and kind spoken—not that I ever could tell one word out of ten as he said.”

Alice could not forbear smiling, though her heart was very heavy; and she walked round the garden till it was almost breakfast-time, her whole thoughts employed on the generous and worthy Macgregor.—“Oh that I could but have

have returned his love!" thought she; "but how true is the remark of the inimitable Shakspeare, 'The course of true love never did run smooth.'"

When Fennel came down to breakfast—"Alice, my love," said he, "we have stayed too long in the country; the days are short, and the mornings and evenings very chill. I should like to return to town the day after to-morrow. Captain Macgregor is obliged to go to Scotland on some particular business, and he will not come here again."

Alice immediately changed countenance, and then burst into tears; she was just about to say—"Will he never return to us?" but her heart fluttered so she could not speak, and an universal tremor agitated her frame, as she thought on the vow made by Macgregor of never seeing her more.

Her father would not seem to notice her emotion, but said—"Here am I now, sitting by a good fire, the wintry wind whistling, and the cold rain beating
ing

ing against the windows—and all my friends, too, in town, where I generally used to be the first to shew myself. I should not have stayed here so long certainly, but my young friend Macgregor does not like London—it is he who has kept us here so long. Shall I order the chaise for to-morrow? do you think that you and Betty can get ready by that time? if not, I will put off our journey to the next day.”

“ Oh! I am sure we can be ready to go to-morrow,” said Alice.

“ Well, then I will take Betty’s place in the coach that goes at twelve; we will start too at the same time, and dine on the road.”

Alice felt relieved when her father set off on this requisite business; and Betty heard the news of her going to town with much pleasure, as the household of the good Mr. Fennel was truly united, and she longed to see her fellow-servants again.

Alice was glad to retire, under the

pretence of packing up her own clothes, and those of her father; and as soon as she had attained her chamber, she sat down, and gave way to a violent flood of tears.—“Is friendship,” thought she, “so nearly allied to love, that I should feel the absence of Macgregor with that anguish I experience? My feelings are incomprehensible to myself. I have been ever of opinion—²and oh! I am sure my opinion is well-founded—that love takes place in our bosoms in a moment unlooked-for, without any particular proof of the beloved object’s merit. Ah! what am I thinking of? did I say to myself without *proof* of merit? Ah! I will, if possible, get that French book again, that Howard once took from me, and told me I was not old enough to understand it: it was ‘*les Affinités Electifs*’; but I am sure I understand it; for these *affinités* seem actually to exist between Macgregor and myself; and yet I do not love him—no, no; the
affi-

affinities, exist not, therefore, *positively*, between him and me—but where else? My love for one object is hopeless: Macgregor says he lives but in my presence, and I feel I cannot exist without my friend. Alas, poor Alice! you are in a delusion; you love the seemingly-repellant Macgregor better than you are aware.”

Long had she sat, in silent reverie, plunged deeper and deeper in the labyrinth of thought, till she was startled by hearing the clock strike one; her hair was yet in papers, and nothing done in the packing way. Presently Betty came in, with many apologies for her intrusion; but, she said, she had waited, and waited, and wondered how Miss had not yet come down to say a word about dinner, and how it was to be sent up, &c. She said, too, that she had taken the liberty to bring up the Scotch novels out of the parlour, 'cause she thought how Miss would like to put 'em at the bottom of her

her

her trunk, as she did when she brought them from London.

Alice thanked her, followed her down stairs, and bustled about to see after the dinner concerns.

“You see, Miss,” said Betty, “I’ve ventured to do as much of my own accord as you *mought* like I should, a’ter what I heard you say last night. To be sure I arn’t such a *perffessed* cook as *Jenny Deans*, Miss, I think you call her; but master’s much pleased with my cooking, and says how I shall make a very excellent cook in time.”

“You do extremely well,” said Alice, blushing at her own folly in calling poor Jane Arrowsmith by the name of Jenny Deans, “and you have done exactly as I wished this morning. It is very fortunate you can cook so well, for it is requisite we should bring a housemaid with us; and you know my father never takes but one servant in the country, because he does not like a female to be left entirely alone in our house in town.

Both

Both he and I have been perfectly satisfied with you here."

"Ah, Miss!" said Betty, "what a good man master is! how few are so considerate! but they'll go, and leave a poor, lone woman in a great rambling house, all by herself; and that's the way that there's so much housebreaking, and poor women getting their *throates* cut."

Alice gave a few more directions, and then went up again, saying, she should be very busy till dinner-time. Indeed she had already been very busy, but it was in a train of thought, that had carried her she scarce knew whither. She now diligently set about making her packages; and as she laid six ponderous volumes, written by her once-dear UNKNOWN, at the bottom of a large trunk, she sighed deeply, saying to herself—"Ah! it is to you, fatal volumes, that I owe, in part, my present unhappiness! But is it not rather my own romantic folly that has undone me?—Oh, Mac-

gregor! how sweetly, with how much persuasive good sense, have you often pointed out to me the danger of enthusiasm! Half-an-hour of your just reasoning has had more effect on my mind, than all the sarcasms of the Butlers, my brother's incessant laughter, or my father's violence against what he calls quackery.

CHAPTER VI.

Pleasures of the Metropolis.

MR. and Mrs. Howard returned much sooner to London than had been expected: they had not set off for Cheltenham before the departure of lady Macbane and her party, on her second excursion to London; and had been but to a short distance, to pass a few weeks with a friend. Before they had been two days at Cheltenham, an express arrived to Mr. Howard, that a distant relation, from whom he never had the smallest expectations, had been gathered to his forefathers, and had left his large fortune to be equally divided between Mr. Howard

Howard and his infant son, appointing Howard also guardian of that son, during his nonage.

It was requisite, therefore, that Mr. Howard should go immediately to town, and Mrs. Howard accompanied him. The succession they found, on investigation, was even more than they had expected; though they always knew, that old Mr. Scudamore, Howard's second cousin, was immensely rich; but they had, at the same time, imagined that all his great personal wealth would have gone to those of the family that Mr. Scudamore had married into; he had long been a widower, and Mr. Howard was his nearest relation living, by his mother's side.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard, wealthy before, were not spoiled by this sudden acquisition, but they certainly grew more fashionable; an elegant carriage was set up, and a more superb house taken, situated in Portman-square near the centre

of that splendid and picturesque situation. They could not think of remaining in town, when all the world of rank and fashion were quitting it. They took excursions, in their own coach and four, through the most pleasant counties, and viewed the most desirable retreats about forty or sixty miles from London; at one of which, between the above-mentioned distances, they purchased a beautiful villa, and intended, like the rest of the fashionable world, to pass their Christmas at their country-seat.

They entreated that Mr. Fennel and his daughter, at whose long stay from town they were much astonished, to allow them to send down their carriage, to transport them to London; but Fennel, to whom habit had become a second nature, though he was not prohibited, by his uncle's will, from riding in other people's carriages, so long as he did not keep one of his own, yet declared, that he felt himself more at his ease in a hired
post-

postchaise, where the postboy would be civil and careful, for his own sake, than to be driven by a pampered coachman in a laced livery, who would, perhaps, with his daring and modern Jehu style of driving, break his neck. neither did he desire to be attended by a more saucy jackanapes or a footman, who, though he may be one, among many others of his party-coloured tribe, who lives more than half of his days, when out of place, in a wretched garret, on a red herring or an onion, yet thinks, as he skips behind his master's gilded carriage, that he is quite as great a man as he who rides in it—"and would sneer at me," added Fennel, "because I do not keep one."

Such were Fennel's own private thoughts, though he heartily thanked his dear Elizabeth for her proffered kindness.—“*Trop est trop*,” he would often say to his friend Butler, after his arrival in town. “My girl and her ami-

able Howard, with always plenty at their command, were fifty times happier than they are now, and made their friends so too; more so than they ever will or can again. It is now a scene of racket and parties with them, from week's end to week's end; and when I cross any of our new wide streets, where one is in constant danger of one's life, I verily expect to lose mine, by Mrs. Howard's two prancing dapple greys—the vicious toads! For madam is shopping almost every day (morning I will not call it), and spending a little revenue in one nonsense or another. And then our evenings, oh! our delightful, social evenings there—I foresee they will soon be at an end: they are obliged to dine so late, that they never think of taking supper, unless it is on my account; no, no; it is now, ‘Mrs. Howard at home:’ and a pretty home it is made of; it is worse than crowding into the pit at the play-house, for some modern quack actor's benefit.

nefit. I was once caught at one of these her 'at-homes,' and hang me if I could stir, hand or foot! Alice is generally invited to them; but she does not always accept the invitation; when she does, the carriage comes for her when I am going to bed, and when she ought to be asleep. She departs, blooming with health and beauty, and comes home, at two or three in the morning, looking all the next day as pale as a ghost. I like her to see a little of the world, that she may know how to behave herself properly, in the sphere of life in which I hope, ere long, to see her move. My children, thank Heaven! have no restrictions put on them; as for myself, I do not find any thing irksome in being ordered by my kind uncle to live *only* comfortable; trust me, it is the best way to live, especially when the age of illusion has passed away: but I was speaking of my girl, who, while she lives with me, shall not spoil her health, nor lose

the bloom for which she is solely indebted to nature, with her sister's late hours: nor indeed does Alice desire to live in that fashionable style; the dear creature had rather be at home with me: she is becoming an intelligent and pleasing companion, since our sojournment in the country; and though she has relapsed a little into her ancient mania of Scotch novel reading, and loves to dress in the Scottish style, yet she has quite done with the dialect; and she does not now read too much; indeed, I will say, in the height of her adoration of Walter Scott, or whatever other *Scot* he may be, she never neglected those household concerns, which every female ought to be well acquainted with, be her lot in life ever so opulent or genteel. Alice is naturally of a very domestic turn of mind; and happy will be that man who shall call her wife; for she is kind, tender-hearted, and affectionate, and loves her home."

"Ah!"

“ Ah !” said Butler, with a deep sigh, “ we both love our children: would to Heaven they were united ! Though my son is now absent from home, I assure you he is not in his right element ; roving about is not his passion by any means—he is formed for domestic happiness ; and could I but once see him fixed, he will, I am sure, make a tender and excellent husband.”

“ He is rather too fond though of fashionable life, I think,” said Fennel, “ for him to make a *very* good Benedict.”

“ Pardon me,” said Butler ; “ I am sure that Robert is of a character both to enjoy and bestow domestic happiness, to its highest degree of felicity.”

“ Well,” said Fennel, “ it is very possible ; his father, I will say, was one of the best husbands in the world, though he did not marry for love, and though his temper was often tried ; and when your son loves sincerely and well, he is certainly as likely to be as fond of his

home as over his father was; but, my dear fellow, you were always accustomed from your infancy to what is called fashionable life; and though, like myself, you are something of a monogamist, yet you have been a very gay widower in outward appearance, and have generally shewn yourself in all those parties that weary me to death; and many has been the hook thrown out for you; but you were too prudent to bite."

"It was love for my son, more than prudence, I can assure you," said Butler. "I really regarded his mother for her many good qualities, when I began to know her well, which it was a pity she suffered to be obscured by pride and passion. As you say, the age of illusion when I lost her had passed away, and it would have been a ridiculous piece of injustice towards my son, though his mother left him an independence which was very handsome, had I suffered myself to be ensnared by love; for I assure

you, I should not have married a second time for money ; I should have been only won by a lovely young woman, with a mind corresponding with her outward attractions ; and, as I can safely assure you that I never could find such a female, I can as safely say, that I never have been in love in my life, except with my old boyish college flame, who has been long married, and the mother of at least a dozen children."

" Well," said Fennel, " but you follow the gay stream yet ; you are always at Mrs. Howard's ' at-homes ;' and there, I do believe, you are yourself quite *at home*."

" Assuredly," replied Butler, " more so than at any other of these bustling scenes ; because I regard your daughter and her husband more than I do any one else, except yourself. I declare to you, on mine honour, I refuse more than half of the invitations that are sent me ;

I never refuse theirs, unless I am very particularly engaged."

"Ay; but you do not see much of either Howard or his wife, though they are at home," remarked Fennel.

"True," replied his friend; "I was there one evening last week, and I could not speak a word to either of them: and I will tell you what, my dear Fennel, when we are no longer young, we cannot find any enjoyment in these turbulent scenes."

Fennel grasped the hand of Butler, and nodded his head.

"And, I am sure," resumed Butler, "that Mrs. Howard is not quite 'at home' at these squeezes she thinks herself obliged to give; trust me, after she and her husband, who by the bye loves a crowd better than she does, have passed one Christmas at their new country-seat, they will come back to the former comforts of a gentleman's plentiful and happy establishment, not regulated

lated by the ridiculous rules of modern customs. We shall again have our social meetings there: their dinners, now at eight o'clock, will go back to five in the long days, and six in the short ones; and we shall have our convivial *petits soupers* there as usual."

"May you be a true prophet!" said Fennel, with a groan, as he thought on the festive season of Christmas, which he so loved to see kept up, as in the good old times.—"Ah, Butler," added he, "what a happy day used that of Christmas to be to me! when we all met, you and your son, and only our dear family party, as regular as the day came round, after Howard's marriage with Elizabeth; and that will be five years next May. With what pleasure have I witnessed her happiness, while I had my children beside me, with my beautiful little grandson! I am glad, on the child's account, that they have had this accession to their fortune, otherwise
I could

I could wish it at the bottom of the sea, before it had come to them ; they had plenty, and to spare ; and I am sure their increase of wealth has not increased their comforts."

" My dear friend," said Butler, " I shall most sincerely regret the deprivation of the enjoyment we used always to experience on Christmas day ; and it seems like the falling off of the comforts of life, previous to its drawing towards its final close : but I am sure your daughter and your son-in-law will not be happy, if you do not consent to go down to them in the country, and pass your Christmas there ; I know it is what they expect, for they have invited me ; but I think I shall not go ; I feel journies fatiguing at that season of the year. If you are resolved not to go, you and I, I hope, will pass a happy and a merry Christmas together, at my house, in town."

" I trust we shall pass it somewhere
together,"

together," said Fennel, again firmly grasping the hand of his friend ; " and, I declare, I had rather eat a mutton-chop, quite alone by my fireside, in London, on Christmas day, than I would be in the country at that dreary season of the year ; and I am sure those who have country-seats, might do just as much good by employing the clergyman, or some trusty person, to distribute their bounty amongst their poor tenants : there are many more miserable creatures here, that want food and coals, at that time ; and the rich, perhaps, might do an abundant deal more good by staying in town to disseminate their bounties : therefore, if I have any thing to spare, it shall go to the poor of my own parish—my half-starving fellow-cocknies : and why should I pain myself by going to a large stately mansion, situated alone, perhaps on a bleak hill ; and if I want to take a walk, my chief delight in the country, I shall find the footways two or
three

three feet deep in snow, or from a heavy rain so muddy, that my feet sink over my shoes at every step. Then I have the pain of seeing the trees and hedges stript of all their verdure, and my poor heart aching, every time I look out of the window, to see the dear little fluttering birds flying from spray to spray, unable to find a shelter from the piercing cold or deluging rain. No, no; I am an old-fashioned fellow; give me the country, when all nature is smiling, and full of joy and life; such are 'the joys of the country, my jewel, for me.' But in winter, give me my elbow-chair, by a fine sea-coal fire; and let me see the chimnies smoking, the town full, and trade and commerce flourishing!"

They were now interrupted by Alice, who made but three steps from the top of the flight of stairs that led to her chamber, into the parlour where the two friends were conversing. She blushed at seeing Mr. Butler, who increased her
con-

confusion by saying—"Well done, Miss Fennel! I suppose that letter, which you hold open in your hand, is from some very dear friend indeed?"

"Poor Alice," said Fennel, increasing her confusion, "is a pattern of friendship; and she has wisely chosen a *male* friend: I want her to love him, and take him for a husband; but she tells me, it is impossible: however, nobody, I believe, will slander her for her warmth of friendship; for, poor fellow! the late war has so hacked and disfigured the object of my daughter's great esteem, that he is quite frightful."

"But his mind is most beautiful," said Alice, vexed to hear her father speak in that slighting manner of one she so highly venerated, and whom once her father had almost commanded her to love.

"Oh!" said Butler, "I suppose it is captain Macdougall, of the forty-second,
that

that danced with Miss Fennel, one night, last spring, at a fancy ball?"

"No, indeed, sir," said Alice, "it is not;" and she felt rather angry; but recovering herself, she said, as she turned to her father—"Do, my dear sir, now let us leave out the O's and the Macs, and tell me how I shall answer this letter—I hope in the affirmative?" added she, in that winning way that so well became her.

"Oh, yes, yes," said Fennel, "I will answer it myself."

The letter contained an invitation to Mr. Fennel and his daughter from the Howards, to dine with them, *sans cérémonie*, at five o'clock, adding, that they had sent to Mr. Butler, who they always considered as one of their own family, and they knew, if he was disengaged, that he would excuse the short notice.

"You will go I hope?" said Fennel, after shewing him the letter.

"Oh, yes, without doubt," said Butler;

ler; "and a box, I find, is taken at Drury-Lane Theatre."

"Yes, yes," said Fennel; while he added, rather mischievously, "and I am only sorry, for the sake of my daughter Alice, that it is neither *Rob Roy* nor *Guy Mannering* that is to be performed."

Alice began to pout a little; yet she could not hear the name of *Rob Roy* without a pleasurable emotion. Butler, taking her hand, while her father was finishing his letter, said—"Alice, you have not given me a kiss this morning."

"And when, sir," said she, laughing, "have I ever been accustomed to be so prodigal of my kisses, that you should claim one as your right?"

"You may call it prodigality, if you please," said Butler; "but a kiss given to me, from you, would be like that of a daughter to a father, and would be received by me with the same chaste affection."

The

The cheeks of Alice now became so glowing, that Butler feared he had struck a chord which was always a jarring one, and that it might vibrate in the association the title of father would bring to her ideas, as she thought on the son, towards whom she had ever manifested dislike. Alice, however, who could not bear to hurt the feelings of any one, particularly one of such keen sensibility as her father's valued friend, was sorry that she had so forcibly dragged away her hand from the pressure of that of Mr. Butler; and she smilingly made some observations on the weather, and uttered a few desultory sentences: he gently patted her cheek, and peace was restored: Butler was well skilled in guessing the emotions of the heart by the changes of the countenance.

“Ring the bell, my dear,” said Fennel, after sealing his letter.

Alice, who knew his little peculiarities, and always studied them, to promote

mote

note his comfort, said—"Oh! I will give it to the footman."

"You will do no such thing," said Fennel.

"Shall I call Betty, then, to give it him?"

"No, my dear, ring the bell; I do not choose my daughter to cross the hall, and descend the kitchen-stairs, when her sister's pampered servant, in his laced livery, is sitting there."

Alice then rang the bell; and Butler said—"How much I admire, amongst all your eccentricity, your just discrimination!"

"Oh, ay," said Fennel, "I warrant you! because that is a trait of discrimination, as you are pleased to call it, that flatters your own proud way of thinking: pride, quackery, and vanity, are now the prevailing features of the English nation."

An excellent dinner was ready, and sat down to, precisely at five o'clock, and
partook

partook of by five of the happiest beings, allied by the ties of kindred and firm friendship, in the world.

Mrs. Howard, after she informed them that the carriage would be at the door at half-past six, to convey the party to the theatre, good-humouredly confessed herself weary of fashionable life in the metropolis; and that when she returned again, after the Christmas holidays, she should gradually commence that reform, which, she knew, could very easily be done.

Howard contended, that as she had begun, so she must now go on, or offend all her friends of high rank.

“Oh, my dear Howard!” said she, “do not call them *friends*; if they style themselves so, they are such as I would much rather be without.”

“Now,” said Butler, turning to Fennel, “am I not a true prophet?”

“I hope you are,” said Fennel; “time, however, will shew.”

Butler

Butler was seated by Alice, both at dinner and at the theatre: he was really astonished at the very visible improvement in her manners and conversation since the last time he had met her at Mr. Howard's, before her departure for the country; she did, indeed, do honour to the instructions of her tutor and friend, Macgregor. Butler was quite charmed by her sensible observations on the drama, and various other subjects; not that we mean to say they were any thing *very* extraordinary, but they were judicious from so young a person; and though a strong tincture of romantic enthusiasm was still perceptible, yet her remarks, and general style of expressing herself, were such as could not, at one time, ever be expected to emanate from the mind of one who promised to be nothing more than a mere Scotch novel-reader.

The play was that inimitable comedy of Wild Oats, or the Strolling Gentleman.

man. The characters this evening were so judiciously cast, and were consequently so ably performed, that even Fennel was delighted, though he was sometimes vexed with Mr. and Mrs. Howard for their want of attention—she being employed more than half the second act in kissing her hand, and nodding to her new fashionable acquaintance; while Howard was discussing a very serious political question with a member of parliament close behind Fennel, during one of the most laughable scenes in the comedy, and caused the good man to fidget, and vex, and turn round ever, minute, with a fretful countenance, that most visibly evinced his inward displeasure.

After staying to see a new and celebrated farce, the party accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Howard home, where they stayed, and partook of a cold supper; and the winged hours flew away, in harmless mirth and social intercourse of
 thought,

thought and opinions, so that Butler, Fennel, and his daughter, did not reach their dwellings till half-past three the next morning.

"This will not do," said Fennel, as he sat taking his breakfast at half-past eleven.

"Ah! but," said Alice, "you must allow, my dear sir, that we had a most charming day and evening yesterday."

"Yes," said Fennel, laughing; "and not content with seeing a good comedy and farce, we must finish, to be sure, with *Up all night!*"

"You will go with us, sir, to the Cosmorama, will you not," said Alice, "this morning?"

"Yes, I believe I will," said Fennel; "I am fond of viewing such specimens of art and ingenuity."

"But Mrs Howard will call for us about one," resumed Alice, "for we are going shopping first."

"Oh, hang your shopping!" exclaimed Fennel;

Fennel; "I will not go with you then, I promise you: if you can tell me when you think you shall have done loitering through the different show *magasins*, and have turned over, and tumbled as many haberdashers' and mercers' goods till you are weary, so that you can give a guess at what hour you will be at the Cosmorama, I will meet you there. And now, Alice, I will speak to you seriously; your sister Elizabeth was one of the best little wives in the world—I hope she is so still; but I never could have believed that she would so readily have launched into all the ridiculous customs of fashion. You were always given to this *shopping* propensity; hunting after one nonsense or another, in order to ornament yourself like Walter Scott's heroes and heroines."

Poor Alice was sadly confused, as she thought of the many mornings she had lost in the vain search after a *silver Virgin Mary* brooch.

Fennel,

Fennel, however, without seeming to mark her confusion, resumed—"I charge you, when you are married, never to waste your husband's time and money this way—your mother never did so; yet she was never denied buying any thing she liked, and it was my pride always to see her well dressed."

"I shall never marry," pensively replied Alice.

"Ah, but you will though! and I request of you, if you really want any article of female attire, to go and buy it, now, as my daughter, and then as, I hope, the wife of some worthy man; but let me hear of no fancied wants, no taking up a tradesman's time with making him unfold a parcel of different goods, for you to admire only, without purchasing, merely for the sake of fashion, and lounging about in modern repositories of dress and gewgaws, like other idle young women."

Letters were now brought in; and

Alice, with a fluttering heart, beheld one, on which was the Glasgow post-mark, addressed to herself, in a handwriting she was unacquainted with; yet hope told her to guess it was from Macgregor. She was much disappointed on opening it, though it was from one she really loved, Mrs. Hartfield, directed by her husband. Alice had much rather it had been from her valued friend.

“Is that from Mac?” said Fennel, carelessly.

“No, sir,” said Alice, with a faltering voice and quivering lip, “it is from Mrs. Hartfield.” While she thought, within herself—“Ah! I found it impossible to return his love—I told him what ought to have been for ever buried in my own breast; and therefore he is resolved to have no farther commerce with me. Oh, Macgregor! why not accept a friendship, as pure, sincere, and tender, as I find, on my side, it will be lasting? How many would forget, but I never can, amidst
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the whirl of diversions and company, in which my sister engages me, an object, in which the heart has so little share ! but I cannot forget Macgregor, either as my friend, or my instructor. The ties of friendship, as well as those of love, are, I am convinced, directed, like the thread of our lives, by an invisible guardian spirit."

Wrapt in this reverie, sat the romantic Alice, till she was startled by her father saying—"Here is a very polite courtier-like letter from sir Alexander Macbane."

"Another letter from Scotland too," thought Alice, "and yet not one from Macgregor." She read over the letter that her father handed to her, and she could just see that it was filled with acknowledgments for his great kindness and attention to his wife and daughter ; as for reading it with any kind of interest, that was out of the question—her thoughts were otherwise employed.

On the next letter her father opened she saw the Windsor postmark; and over this her father seemed frequently to smile with pleasure. She thought the address looked very much like Macgregor's handwriting, but she durst not trust her tongue to ask a question; and her father giving a sigh, and looking more serious when he came to the conclusion, and reading the last side carefully over again, consigned it to his letter-case, and put it, with that, into his pocket.

"What have we here," said he, as he took up the last letter, "with this clerk-like written direction?" when opening it, and glancing over the two or three first lines, he said—"You had better get yourself ready, Alice, as soon as you have ordered dinner, for your sister, I dare say, will be here by the time she fixed on, and it is now past twelve."

Alice had but just completed her dress by the time Mrs. Howard's carriage

riage called for her; and when she came down, she saw her father speaking at the coach-door, with some seriousness, to her sister, and that Mrs. Howard's countenance had on it an expression of melancholy.

"I do believe," said Alice, as they drove off, "that you have had a lecture this morning."

"From whom, my dear?" asked Mrs. Howard

"My father; he has spoken, I assure you, very seriously to me about shopping."

"No, indeed; not a word passed between us on such a subject," said Mrs. Howard.

"Then you are not well, I fear, my dear Elizabeth?"

"Never better, I assure you. And so you have heard from your friend, Mrs. Hartfield; and my father tells me, too, that he has had a letter from sir Alexander Macbane."

“ Yes,” said Alice, “ and he had two other letters: I do not know who they came from.”

Mrs. Howard was silent, and looked serious.

“ Here,” added Alice, “ is Mrs. Hartfield’s letter.”

In inspecting old china, French toys, trinkets, *bijouterie*, and all the flowers and frippery imported from the Continent, the two sisters passed a large portion of the morning, in Regent-street and Waterloo-place, amidst a throng of idle women of quality and fashion.

Mrs. Howard bought a number of expensive trifles she did not want, and made some acceptable presents of the same kind to her young sister, who might be said, in some degree, to want them, because otherwise she would have had them not; for though she had some handsome and valuable trinkets, formerly belonging to her mother, which had been equally divided between Mrs.
Howard

peevishly, "those two that are now gone in to inspect the fancy jewellery."

"Does not your ladyship know?" said the honourable Miss Petersfield: "the eldest is the rich Mrs. Howard; her husband is a branch of the great Irish Howards, in the county of Cork—a charming fellow! and they have a boy that is a little Cupid, now joint heir, with his father, to old Scudamore's immense property."

"Pray introduce me," said lady Stanfield; "the youngest is a fine creature; she is by far the handsomest. Pray, what was their family name, for you know every thing?"

This, indeed, was true; and it was from this lady that Miss Underwood and her mother gained so much knowledge of the private history of every family of note in the metropolis.

"Can you tell me," resumed the countess, as she eyed the sisters with
much

much approving scrutiny, "the family name of the ladies?"

"Fennel," answered Miss Petersfield.

"Heavens! how plebeian!"

"Can your ladyship wonder, when I tell you that their father was an apothecary?"

"Shocking!" exclaimed the countess.

"How noblemen and gentlemen do now disgrace themselves, by marrying the daughters of nobody knows who!"

"But he belonged to the company of surgeons," said Miss Petersfield, "and was thought very highly of indeed in that profession: he has retired from business several years, with a very handsome fortune."

"Pray, have the daughters fortunes?"

"Oh! very fine portions."

"Well, well, introduce me, pray—at least to Mrs. Howard; every body of fashion visits the Howards."

"Oh dear, yes; my friend, Miss Underwood, is *very* intimate there."

“ Ah! there is a poor half-starved family !”

Miss Petersfield now approached.—
“ Allow me, my dear Mrs. Howard,” said she, “ to introduce to you my dear friend, the countess of Stanfield.”

Whether a few of the depreciating sentences that had fallen from the countess had reached Mrs. Howard’s ears, or whether quite weary of the scandalous whisperings and insipid sameness of fashionable life, we know not, but Mrs. Howard and her sister very coolly returned the high honour that Miss Petersfield thought she had procured them, and the countess, quick as lightning to all that attacked her own feelings, took the arm of Miss Petersfield, whispering the following elegant remark as she stepped into her carriage.—“ Ah! set a beggar on horseback, and he will ride to the devil.”

Miss Petersfield was rather vexed.—
“ Oh, my lady !” said she, “ not a beggar—

gar—but plebeian, I grant you, in the true sense of the word.”

The countess was, however, extremely mortified: she wanted much to increase the number of her respectable acquaintance; for her ladyship's reputation was very equivocal, and rumour had not been busy without sufficient cause; but her haughtiness, and, at times, her apparent candour, with great amiability of manners, when she pleased to adopt them, made the good and unsuspecting often declare, that they could not believe such an open-hearted female could be guilty of the faults, not to say crimes, that had been imputed to her; but the report of which had long died away; and the countess of Stanfield, in her fifty-eighth year, still a fine, though rather too corpulent a woman, now shone again in splendour, as she again took the field of fashionable notoriety.

The honourable Miss Petersfield, a
spinster

spinster of forty-two, was her constant friend and companion ; because, being but young among the honourables, though she would visit the rich gentry, she despised them, and wished only to associate among people of title. When the honourable Mr. Petersfield married her mother, the good lady was the widow of a very rich merchant ; and active and bustling, his relict continued her commercial speculations *sub rosa* ; and left her daughter, for she outlived her second husband also, a large fortune : but the heiress was such a little sharp-featured, vindictive, speculating kind of a thing, herself, that though she had, almost immediately after her mother's death, which happened when Miss was six-and-thirty, many lovers, yet they all fell off, when they found that she insisted, as one of her marriage-articles, the having the whole of her fortune settled on herself, totally independent of a husband. " Oh !" thought they, " does
the

the little splenetic wretch think any man will be tied to such a thing as she is, for her *own* sake?" Miss Petersfield was cunning enough to guess this; for Ovid says of the sex, and, perhaps, with some truth—"The jades grow cunning, as they grow more old."

Frigid by nature, she did not care sufficiently for the *superior* sex, as man calls it, to barter her wealth and independent will for the empty, and perhaps, as it might prove to her, *miserable* title of a wife: she therefore, in single blessedness, hugged herself in being able to do, only just what she pleased. The countess of Stanfield was her bosom friend, and Miss Petersfield was enabled also to be to her ladyship a most *convenient* friend, often lending that extravagant woman of quality a handsome sum of money. The countess, however, with all her faults, was just in her payments, always taking care to reimburse the lender again, though she very soon afterwards

terwards was obliged, perhaps, to borrow a still larger sum.

A divorcee had once hung over the head of lady Stanfield, who, though she was guilty, had so cautiously conducted her illicit intercourse, that nothing criminal could be proved against her: her native impudence, which never forsook her, made her bring an action against the accusing parties, who were her husband's near relations, for defamation; she gained her cause, with large damages, but her husband would never see her more; he wished much to be legally separated from a woman of whose guilt he was fully convinced, but he allowed her a very handsome separate maintenance. and, though punctually paid, she branded him with extreme meanness; and notwithstanding many were convinced that she was an abandoned woman, some few pitied her, as one most deeply injured. She had no children by her lord; but, at his death, which took place
a few

a few years after their separation, she became, over and above her jointure, a very rich widow. She laid all the blame on her husband, for having cruelly deserted her, when in her prime of beauty ; and the sweet fascinating woman was believed, though it was known by almost every member of the fashionable world, that she brought about a match between the nobleman, with whom she had been guilty and her own sister, who was several years younger than herself ; and this step convinced the simple and unsuspecting that the countess must have been the *innocent* victim of the most cruel slander. Those who were depraved themselves judged otherwise, and many indeed knew better ; but sadly vitiated, we are sorry to say, are the principles of a great part of those who shine with all the splendid advantages of wealth and title.

Whether or not the nobleman above mentioned ever confided to his amiable
 young

young wife the sin he had been guilty of—for we are old-fashioned enough to call adultery a sin—or whether he might be, as he might easily be judged, an unprincipled man, they certainly made a very wretched couple; and the sisters were extremely distant to each other, till their coolness ended in never meeting, except by accident, in the different haunts of fashion, and then they carefully kept from exchanging a word together, while the *ci-devant* lovers would give each other a familiar nod.

The good Fennel had waited at the Cosmorama till he was quite weary; and the carriage of Mrs. Howard rattled up to the entrance just as he was coming out, as he had found the crowd increase to a degree of suffocation, and he had resolved to stay no longer. It was in vain that his daughters endeavoured to persuade him to turn back again; he would not consent, and only said—
 “Bring Alice home time enough, and
 do

do not let me eat a solitary dinner. I am half determined to answer the letter I mentioned to you in the negative."

"And yet, sir——" said Mrs. Howard.

"Yes, I understand you, my dear Elizabeth—it might seem cruel; well, at all events, I must answer it one way or the other before the post goes out."

"My dear sir," said Mrs. Howard, (who had been affected by the manner in which her father had said—"Do not let me take a *solitary* dinner,") "pray get into the carriage; my sister and I will come here some other morning.—It will be the same to you, will it not, my love?" added she, addressing Alice.

"Oh yes," said Alice, "I really feel weary, and had much rather go home."

Fennel then ascended the carriage, with a trifling philippic against shopping, and was set down, with his youngest daughter, at his own door, by the affectionate Mrs. Howard.

CHAPTER VII.

• Puzzled, not Pleased.

THE letter that caused Mr. Fennel so much thought, and of which he had exclaimed, on seeing the address, that it was directed in a clerk-like hand, came from the young husband of Mrs. Jenkins. It contained the intelligence, that the old lady was confined to her bed by severe indisposition; and Jenkins told Mr. Fennel, that he had made use of every kind of persuasion he was master of, as the physicians had declared her to be in danger, to make her will, bequeathing that half of her property which he had settled solely upon her to Miss Fennel:

that

that he found her, he told him, very averse to this; being obstinately bent to leave all she was worth in the world to her Jenkins, whom she so tenderly loved, and to whom she was so anxious to give every proof of the sincerity of her affection. Mr. Jenkins, however, now went on to inform Mr. Fennel, that he had overruled this, her former determination; alleging, that he had already, especially for a man like him, almost a princely revenue; and that, if she would but comply with his request of leaving her share to her goddaughter, it was the only way to gain him the respect of her friends, and to prove to them, that he was not a covetous, but an honest man, who did not seek to enrich himself by her death, which he would yet flatter himself might be far off, but which, he kindly and tenderly told her, he should never cease to lament as long as he lived.

The old woman was still very anxious to

to reward such unexampled love, by leaving him all she was worth in the world ; but, one day, though seeming to have gained a little bodily strength, she became fully sensible of her approaching dissolution, and she told her husband, that she would comply with his request in making a codicil to her will, in favour of Miss Fennel, her god-daughter, on one condition only, which she should not name, but in the presence of Mr. Fennel and his child, Alice ; and surely they would not, she added, deny to a dying woman's request, what would be of such infinite advantage, and, she was certain, happiness, to themselves.

Fennel felt pained at receiving this letter ; he was very loth to be obliged to Jenkins in any way, but more particularly on his daughter's account : he had not yet forgotten those looks of admiration that the *ci-devant* servant of his old friend had lavished on his handsome
 Alice,

Alice, at the morning visit she had paid to the foolish bride. Now Jenkins had, in his letter—for so the jaundiced eye of Fennel made him fancy he read it—rather taken credit to himself for this bequest intended to be made, at his instigation, by his dying wife; and Fennel thought he dwelt too much, at last, on the great difficulty he had, in being able to prevail on her to leave a handsome fortune to his daughter, on one only condition, which she should name not, unless in the presence of Mr. and Miss Fennel, provided they would come down immediately. What this condition could possibly be, Fennel was at a loss to define; it certainly puzzled him much, and, at the same time, he felt assured, in his own mind, that it was of some unpleasant nature. “Yet why should I give way to such a presentiment?” thought he: “I suppose it is, that I will class Jenkins in the number of my friends. Well, however repugnant
any

any intimacy or frequent intercourse with such a man may be to my feelings, I think I ought, for my daughter's advantage, not to deny her that request. Most likely I shall not see much of him, and therefore I can willingly accord him that, because he has been truly kind and attentive to the poor misguided old soul, and has behaved to her in a manner, as very few young men would have done in his situation."

"Alice," said Fennel, the next morning to his daughter, "put up a few things for you and me, in a small travelling trunk; we are going to take a little journey."

"A journey, my dear sir!" said Alice—"what, at this time of the year?"

"Yes, my dear; your godmother is very ill, and wishes to see us."

"Poor Mrs. Jenkins!" said Alice; "I hope her husband has continued kind to her?" added she, rather doubtingly.

"Oh, truly so!" said Mr. Fennel,
"both

“both kind to her, and generous to you.”

Alice looked rather scornful, which, we must say, did not evince much gratitude on her part; but she never was able, at any time, to disguise her feelings; and, like her father, she did not wish, in any way, to be obliged to Jenkins.—“Does my godmother,” said she, “express a wish to see *me*, as well as you, sir?”

“Yes, my dear; she has some request, it seems, to make in your presence: we will therefore go; we are not obliged to comply with any whimsical request, that may not please us: besides, she may recover; Jenkins is alarmed, perhaps without cause, at seeing a woman confined to her bed, who never was, I believe, but once before in her life, seriously ill; which happened when you was a very little girl indeed; and, I am sure, cannot now remember it. But, however, she is very ill now; and we will take a

cold dinner, at one o'clock, and set off, in a postchaise, about half past two; so do you get ready after breakfast, and I will go and order it. The weather is not unpleasant now, by any means. We will sleep on the road to-night, and then we shall get to Deaconsfield Hall about twelve the next day; which will be a better time than arriving at a sick house at a late hour in the evening. Deaconsfield Hall! Ah! foolish, foolish old girl, to give away the name that herself, as well as her estate, had borne so long!"

Alice felt very low at the thoughts of leaving town just then; she knew well, that their visit, whatever might be their journey, would be an unpleasant one. She was listening to the postman's continued knock at the different doors, nor did her father still the tumultuous beatings of her heart, when, after rising, to take his hat, he sat down again, after having finished his breakfast, and took up the newspaper, saying—"Oh! there
is

is the postman ; I may as well stay, and see if he has any letters for us."

But no, the postman quitted the street without knocking at Mr. Fennel's door.

Alice, after her father's departure, ordered the early cold dinner at one ; to which she added a little fish, because she knew it would please him ; and then, with all the alacrity she was able, she packed up the trunk, and was ready and equipped for her journey by half past twelve.

" See what it is to have a notable, obedient daughter," said Fennel to Butler, whom he brought in with him ; adding—" Mr. Butler, my dear, will lunch with us, at our early dinner. We shall refresh ourselves with tea, after the first twenty miles, and have a good supper, and I hope good beds on the road. Come, Alice, don't wear that dismal face, as if you were really going to the old lady's funeral : why, you are about to be made

a rich heiress; some girls would go wild with joy.”

“ I am happy, sir,” said Alice, very seriously, “ that I am not acquainted with any such girls; they must be unfeeling, indeed, who could go to visit a deathbed, rejoicing in the gain it might bring them.”

“ God bless you ! you are my own girl still,” said Fennel, pressing her to his bosom ; “ you feel as your father ever wishes you to feel on such occasions : I only jested ; seeing your spirits low, I wished to make you smile.”

Butler looked very serious : Fennel had shewed him the letter from Jenkins, and he feared there was some unpleasant request attached to the old lady’s bounty ; otherwise, even the half of Mrs. Jenkins’s fortune was a noble bequest ; and, as he loved his friend as well as himself, and much better than his other darling, money, his eyes sparkled when he first received the intelligence of
Jenkins

Jenkins having been so generous; which gave him, also, a very high opinion of the young man's heart and principles: yet Butler was proud, and he had much rather that the donation to Miss Fennel had come voluntarily from Mrs. Jenkins herself, than that his dear friend should owe any obligation to a man of such low birth as Jenkins, who, he fancied already seemed to boast of the earnest persuasion he had been obliged to make use of with his infatuated wife; and the penetration of Butler saw further than his good, matter-of-fact friend; and though what he plainly foresaw, he knew would have no effect with either Fennel or his daughter, it rather added to his uneasy feelings.

He stayed and partook of their early dinner, and a glass or two of old Madeira: as he handed Alice into the post-chaise, he pressed her hand, and, heaving a profound sigh, he said—"God bless
 I 3 you,

you, my child ! I shall be impatient for your return."

Whether it was the new and tender appellation that her father's friend bestowed upon her, which, in all their long intercourse of intimate freedom, he had never used before—or whether it brought to her mind sensations of either a painful or pleasurable kind, we know not ; but Alice could not master her feelings, and she sunk back in the chaise, overwhelmed in tears—tears which she strove in vain to repress.

What astonished her, on her recovery, was to find her father regarding her, but taking no kind of notice of her agitation, and witnessing her tears with an indifference that she was sure was as foreign to his feelings as his manners—for indeed Fennel had no stoicism in his composition. However, the pleasant weather for the time of year, the verdure yet perceptible on the distant meadows, and the roads free from dust, with-

out being heavy with moisture, rendered their journey pleasant; and, after a cheerful supper, and a good night's rest at a comfortable inn, they set off, in good health, early the next morning, and arrived at the beautiful seat of Mrs. Jenkins at half past one in the afternoon.

CHAPTER VIII.

Proposals of Marriage, &c.

THE expiring rays of life emitted a gleam of brightness, when Mrs. Jenkins, who was now on the bed of death, heard of the arrival of Mr. Fennel and his daughter, who she desired might immediately attend her bedside, for she felt that she had no time to lose : she requested, however, that they would not come without her dear Jenkins, as she had something of the highest importance to say to them in his presence, and in which he was very materially concerned. To this request no one could object; but Alice was seized with a tremour and agitation,

for which she seemed unable to account: imagining, however, as she endeavoured to reason with herself, that it proceeded from the awful scene she was about to witness, she hushed her scruples, which arose so strong in her mind, that she scarce knew how to conquer them, and she resolved to oppose all the repugnance she felt, as she slowly and unwillingly turned her steps towards the chamber of her dying godmother.

But it required all her fortitude to move onward, when Jenkins offered to hand her upstairs; and though the action was attempted to be performed with the greatest respect imaginable, and the expression of "permit me, Miss Fennel," was pronounced in so polite and diffident a manner—nay, even in a way that many wellborn gentlemen could not have uttered it better, yet she shrunk from his touch, as from a torpedo, and very impolitely, without deigning to answer him, put her hand almost

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behind

behind her, and took the arm of her father, as she ascended the spacious staircase, following Jenkins, who looked sheepish enough. Poor Alice, with all her late introductions into fashionable life, was still a child of nature.

As to Mrs. Jenkins, she might be said to lay in state before her death ; her pillowcases tied with pink ribbons and trimmed with lace, her nightcap ornamented in the same manner, while life's taper was almost expiring under a white satin quilt, would, at any other time, have caused deep reflections in the mind of Fennel on the vanity of human nature ; but here he felt rather more gratified than hurt ; as it caused him to entertain a yet higher estimation of the character of Jenkins than before. He has nothing now more to hope from her, thought the good-hearted man, and he is resolved, to the very last, she shall cherish the dear illusion of having been
beloved,

beloved, and shall not feel how ridiculous has been her conduct.

At the foot of the bed, near the fireplace, was seated the lawyer, with his clerk.

“Now, my dear Jenkins,” faintly articulated the dying woman, “you, who alone are the cause of my yet regretting to leave this world, draw near; and you, my beloved goddaughter, for whom I always had a sincere regard: I dare say I seemed to you to have been guilty of a very imprudent action in marrying this young man—no doubt many thought so; but, knowing his worth as I now do, I only say, that were the time to come over again, I would act the same as I have done. However, I am old; and I look on you two now as my children; both of you, draw as near to me as you can, that I may bless you both.”

Alice unwillingly came forward; but fell on her knees when she reached the side of the bed, next the pillow, and

took the emaciated hand of her god-mother.

“ No, no,” said Mrs. Jenkins—“ rise ; give your hand, Alice, to the best of men—to my own Jenkins ; promise me to ensure your own happiness, by marrying him, when I am no more, and the half of my fortune shall be settled exclusively upon you, in your own right.”

Jenkins, and Fénel could plainly see that his eyes, though certainly expressive of surprise, were lighted up with that rapture which proved it to be a most agreeable one, and his cheeks glowed like fire, attempted to raise up the indignant Alice ; and he was beginning to pour forth some bombastical rant, among which might be distinguished the promise of devoting to her every future moment of his life, &c. &c. ; but Alice, without any regard to the poor creature at the point of death, or even to the common rules of civility, cried out, in the most hasty and contemp-

tuous manner—" *You ! Touch me, if you dare ; me marry you !* I would die first !" and she darted to the furthest end of the room ; nor could all the exhortations of her father, nor the supplications of Jenkins, that she would have pity on his dying wife, prevail with her to move.

" Alice," said her father, in a solemn tone, " consider that you are in the chamber of death ! There lies your expiring godmother ! Only reflect a little ; a minute's agitation, such as you must now have given her, might be the cause of her instant demise."

Alice, whose heart was formed of the most exquisite sensibility, came forward ; and again falling on her knees by the bedside of the sick woman, she wept over the hand she gently pressed in her own, while she sobbed out—" Pardon me, dearest madam ; but, indeed, indeed, I never can marry Mr. Jenkins ! Bestow on him, I beseech you, all your

fortune; he deserves it, I am sure, from you."

"Ay, ay," said Mrs. Jenkins, "he does indeed deserve all that, and much more than I can do for him. You are a very foolish girl; and let me advise you, if you wish to be happy, not to stand now in your own light. Come, come, promise me to take time to consider, and I will leave you something handsome."

"Oh, do not leave me any thing, dear madam!" said Alice, "I beseech you; I will not deceive you: no consideration shall ever make me marry Mr. Jenkins. Alas! my heart——"

Fennel, nor any one else, knew not what she was about to utter; we really believe that she, from the natural impulse of that heart, the feelings of which she had never known how to disguise, was about to say, that it recoiled from such a marriage: however, it furnished her father with an idea, and he instantly said—"Pray, Mrs. Jenkins, do not urge

my daughter : she would be sorry, I am sure, to treat you with rudeness ; but her affections are engaged elsewhere ; and, as I highly approve her choice, it is not likely I shall bestow her hand on any one else than the object she has selected."

Alice started ; she arose, and threw herself in her father's arms, and hid her tears and blushes in his bosom :

Mrs. Jenkins dictated to the lawyer, that every shilling she possessed by the settlement Mr. Jenkins had made on her of half her fortune, was now to become his, together with her house-furniture, plate, jewels, &c. &c. of which he was to take immediate possession after her death : in vain he requested a legacy to Miss Fennel, if only of a thousand pounds ; the lady was inflexible ; and Mr. Fennel said—"Sir, we wanted not this fresh proof to judge of the generosity of your disposition ; but I beg you will not make yourself uneasy : Miss

Fennel has quite fortune sufficient without any addition: our wish was always to see your good lady comfortable and happy; and we never were possessed of that self-interest which made us regard her wealth with the eyes of covetousness: I am very glad her riches have fallen into the hands of a worthy man, who has done every thing, I am certain, in his power to render her happy."

Mrs. Jenkins made a sign for Fennel to approach her.—"You are," said she, "still the same noble and generous character I ever knew you. Now, stay with me till I depart for my last home, and attend me thither; and comfort my poor Jenkins, for I know he will mourn, indeed, for me."

The lawyer was writing—she beckoned him to come to her—she whispered him, after she told Fennel to withdraw. She afterwards told Jenkins to open a small casket, and to give her a picture from it.—"This," said she, "my dear
Alice,

Alice, is the portrait of your grandmother, taken when she was young; we were girls together. As Jenkins could not be acquainted with her, it can have no interest for him; therefore, my dear, as it is one of your family, accept it, in remembrance of me."

This was the miniature of a very beautiful young woman, and was handsomely set in gold, encircled by brilliants. The sight of it affected Fennel to tears; it was the very image of his late wife; and he wondered not at the love of her grandmother, when she had constantly before her the image of her lost daughter. Alice found in the portrait a striking resemblance to Mrs. Howard; and the miniature afforded a sensation of pleasure to all parties. The poor, dying Mrs. Jenkins kindly, though feebly, pressed the hand of her goddaughter, saying—"My dear girl, may you be as happy with the object of your choice, as I have been with mine! I now pardon
you

you for refusing him, for I know there is no mastering the affections."

Though Fennel was pleased at this, and, in particular, at a gift which he thought discovered true affection, he began to fear that Mrs. Jenkins, who had always been remarkably inquisitive, would ask him who the gentleman was that had gained his daughter's affections; however, she had now business of more importance to attend to; and complaining of fatigue, she requested to be left for the present, with only her nurse, the lawyer, and her dear Jenkins.

Fennel had again cause to admire the goodness of heart, and innate worthy principles, of a man who had the misfortune of having been so vulgarly brought up as Jenkins: he appeared now to be not only satisfied with the recent conduct of Mrs. Jenkins, but he seemed to experience that real gratification, which only a truly generous mind knows how to feel.

The

The next morning Mrs. Jenkin's was considerably worse, and a clergyman was sent for to pray by her; about seven in the evening she ceased to exist.

Her death made Alice very melancholy: without reflecting on her late godmother's age, she could not forbear saying to herself—"How short is the transition from the bridal-chamber to that of death! Ah! and through this life we walk in darkness." The scene of life's last close was new to her; and she wept unceasingly, after gazing on the breathless clay, and deeply pondering on what we must all, one day, be, the most beautiful amongst us, as well as the most repellant.

Her father took occasion, at this time, to speak to her on the Christian beauties of the immortal soul, that never fade.—"Death, my dear child," said he, "discovers to us the nothingness and vanity of all worldly illusions, and the lesson it teaches is seldom lost on us, though

though Wisdom has often lifted up her voice in vain. But age is the winter of life; and the sun of your godmother's existence might naturally be expected shortly to set. . Real faults she had none; we are all prone to error, and hers will, I doubt not, find mercy from our beneficent Father, and her virtues, for she had many, meet their reward."

Though once poor Alice devoted all her reasoning faculties to one subject, and gave way solely to her youthful enthusiasm, yet fine was the soil in which the germ of parental instruction was sown, and promised an abundant harvest of the choicest fruit.

The good man also advised and admonished Jenkins like a father; he warned him against making the magnificent funeral that he was preparing to order.—"Recollect, my good fellow," said he, "the great disparity of your years with those of the deceased: do not give a neighbourhood, the most respectable

spectable members of which are all inclined to think highly of your principles, any cause to sneer at, what they will not fail to pronounce, among themselves, ostentatious hypocrisy. Let the funeral be handsome, according with the late Mrs. Jenkins's wealth and situation in life; but do not subject yourself to the mortification of a refusal to those numerous cards you are writing to send out, as much as ten miles round, for gentlemen's carriages to follow: let only your own closed, empty carriage bring up the rear. If any gentleman volunteers as a mourner, and for his carriage to follow, as I have known done formerly, well and good—otherwise, have only one mourning-coach and four, containing yourself, the clergyman, the apothecary, and me: in every other respect, spare no cost; give good mourning to all your servants—give handsomely to the clergyman, and distribute as many hatbands, scarfs, and mourning rings, but
not

not too many of the latter, as you please. Trust me, you will be much better thought of, than if you made the parade you were about to do."

Jenkins most gratefully thanked Mr. Fennel for his advice, and literally followed it; but, though he felt himself much gratified by Mr. Fennel's proposal of his father being one of the mourners, he declined it, as, after the marriage of his son, the old man had so taken to drinking, that he was seldom sober for three or four hours together. He was established in a small house, with a good garden and a servant, about twelve miles off, where he enjoyed every comfort, with his pipe and his pot, and never came to the Hall, except when he was invited; though his son was always most kind unto him, and did not expose his fault to Fennel, only, after thanking him for this proof of his kindness, in remembering him, alledged that he was infirm, and said, when the funeral

funeral was over, he should go to see him, and take him a suit of mourning, &c.

Though Mr. Fennel and his daughter certainly could not make themselves much at home at Deaconsfield, yet the former found, in the character of young Jenkins, very much to admire and approve: that he regretted the loss of his wife, was very evident; but there was no hypocritical pretension to grief.

They stayed to see the last scene close over the remains of poor Mrs. Jenkins; and then the widower told Mr. Fennel, that, as he found he was so very repugnant to his daughter—though, certainly, the dying request of his late wife having been complied with, would have rendered him the happiest of men—yet, as another was blest in her affections, God forbid he should be a bar to her happiness!

Alice mournfully shook her head.

Mrs. Jenkins had, however, with her last breath, desired that her will might be

be opened in the presence of Mr. Fennel and his daughter: herein was found a legacy to her godchild of two thousand pounds, and a valuable diamond ring to her old friend Fennel.

The unaffected pleasure evinced by the young man at this bequest, proved that he had been instrumental in obtaining it; and the words that prefaced it, shewed that it had been hard wrung from the testator."

Soon after, Alice and her father set off for their happy and comfortable home, where Butler was waiting, ready to receive them.

The handsome mourning they both appeared in, the black enamelled rings on their fingers, and the sparkling brilliants on Fennel's little finger, which he purposely and ostentatiously displayed, made Butler smile; but it was a smile of anxiety and inquiry.

"There," said Fennel, "my girl is bettered in fortune, I assure you; and
on

on condition only of marrying a handsome young fellow, as rich as a Jew. Do you not think she would be a fool, if she had refused one, so situated? A worthy young man, too, who treated an old woman with delicacy and tenderness, what will he not do for such a girl as my Alice?"

"Oh Fennel!" said Butler--"and this from you!"

Fennel did not seem to heed him.--
 "Look at that picture," resumed he; for he had made Alice tie it round her neck, just before she arrived in town.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Butler, "the picture of her mother! How often, my good friend, have I heard you lament, that you never had her likeness taken!"

"No," said Fennel, with a deep sigh, "this is the portrait of my wife's mother; she was but young when she died; and I think I never saw a mother and daughter so much alike, if this is a faith-

ful likeness of the original, of which I have no doubt, though I never beheld her; you well know, that my beloved wife lived with her grandmother, when first she gained my affections: but, a truce to all this. Alice owes that picture to the generosity of Mr. Jenkins; how can I refuse her to a man, who, in other instances than in this, has shewn himself so liberal?"

Butler snatched up his hat—"Good afternoon to you, Mr. Fennel," said he; "I do not wish to hear any more."

"Oh, papa! you are cruel," said Alice.

"Come back, you simpleton," said Fennel; "do not you, after so many years of trial and proof, yet know your old friend well enough? No, no; Alice Fennel will never be the wife of Mr. Jenkins, I promise you: but, I assure you, such were the conditions proposed by the poor dying old lady; or else all the remainder of her large fortune, which he had handsomely settled on herself, inde-

independent of him, was to revert to her dear husband. Owing to the peremptory refusal of my daughter, and, I must say, not the politest in the world, and my own sincerity in telling the truth—was it not so, Alice?”—Alice blushed, trembled, and hung down her head—“the good lady was induced, not, as she had intended, to cut her goddaughter off, even *without* a shilling, but to give her that picture of her grandmother, and this valuable ring, and two thousand pounds to my girl; so that makes the fortune I can give her something better; therefore, my dear Butler, take her for your——Where is my tongue running on to now?” added Fennel, much embarrassed.

“Oh!” said Butler, “you have only been a little premature, that is all; but,” added he, laughing, “you have said quite enough for me to understand you;” and seizing the hand of Alice, he said—

“ I am sure I will not reject such an offer.”

“ Good Heavens !” said Alice, with vexation—“ what next am I to expect ?”

Fennel paced the room, with hasty steps.

“ My charming Alice,” said Butler, triumphing in his friend’s embarrassment, “ your father has only spoken sooner than he intended ; he means, however, most assuredly, that I should take you for better for worse ; now it certainly would have been *better* had you taken my son, instead of me ; but as you dislike him——”

“ Sir,” interrupted Alice, “ I do *not* dislike Mr. Robert Butler.”

“ Oh, yes, we know you do,” said Butler ; “ that is evident to every one ; therefore, let not your politeness cause you to depart from truth : you well know that you never meet without jarring ; and, as your father wishes us to become one family, he was determined to offer
you

you to me; and, be assured, my charming girl, I will leave nothing undone, on my part, to render you happy."

Alice ventured to look up, to remonstrate against this new offer, when she saw the eyes of Butler suffused in tears, as he regarded her with a tenderness that had, certainly, more in it of the parent than the lover.—"Ah!" thought she, "this is no jest; the beloved friend of my dear father is the suitor now before me; how can I, if it is that father's wish that I should marry him, how can I—and yet I must refuse him. Oh, my sad heart! this is an union that it feels greater repugnance against forming than any other, much as I value and esteem the agreeable, sensible, and truly worthy Butler."

After she had withdrawn herself from the arms of the good man, such were her reflections, as she sat weeping, unable to articulate a syllable.

Fennel felt for his child, and advancing

cing to Butler, as he suddenly stopped in his parlour promenade, he shook him heartily by the hand, saying—"Well done, old boy, I see you can keep up a joke, as well as ever.—Come, come, Alice, do not be so silly; I was only jesting; I am sure my friend Butler would not have you, if you had made him the offer yourself. You should have seen us when we were two youngsters together; I am certain a stranger would not have known what to make of us sometimes."

Alice now joined in the laugh, but her heart was depressed: not one letter had arrived during their absence, and she began, really, to think that Macgregor was resolved to have no correspondence whatever with her: she was very desirous too of asking Mr. Butler a question; but the moment it rose to her lips, diffidence tied her tongue. She was much relieved in the evening by the company of her sister; she and her husband having taken an early dinner, at five o'clock, in
order

order to pass the evening with their father, on his arrival from the country.

Just before supper, Mrs. Howard asked Mr. Butler when he expected his son home?

"Every day," answered Butler, "I am looking for him."

"Indeed, sir!" said Alice; "does it then take so little time to go to Italy and back again?"

"I believe, my dear Miss Fennel," said Butler, "since you first heard he was gone to Italy, it is seven months."

"Oh, no, sir!" said Alice, "I beg your pardon, it is not yet five."

"Bless me!" said Howard, "wonders will never end. Who would have thought that Miss Fennel would ever trouble her head about the absence of Mr. Robert Butler, and calculate so, to a nicety, the time he has been away?"

Alice was so cordially vexed with her brother-in-law, that she could scarce speak a single word to him during sup-

per; though he purposely took care to be helped to every article that stood next her, and to offer her all that happened to be placed next himself.—“ Oh !” thought she, to herself, “ how happy am I, that I have long ceased to confide my thoughts to my sister !”

This self-congratulation had been caused from the laugh from Mrs. Howard, at the remark her husband had made concerning young Butler’s absence ; and the sly, arch look between them both, which proved they were in league to vex her.

After supper, Fennel proposed the health of a friend he much valued ; this was captain Macgregor, of the gallant forty-second. He then, very indifferently, said—“ Alice, will you take any more wine ?”

“ Oh ! certainly,” said Alice, “ I cannot refuse to drink the health of one I so highly esteem.”

Another look of meaning was exchanged

changed between Mr. and Mrs. Howard, and Howard said—"Is captain Macgregor a handsome man, Alice?"

"I dare say, sir," said she, "that you know well to the contrary: but his beauty lies in his noble mind; nor would he, on the most trifling occasion, or by the most trifling jest, hurt the feelings of another. I do not think he ever *could* have been handsome; though he owes much of his present disfigurement to his bravery; but never would Macgregor jeer at the personal defects of another: as to his excellence of heart, and mental endowments, I am sure no one can come in competition with him."

Oh, what a bright fire then darted from her dark, intelligent eye! When this fire was checked, she certainly looked more beautiful, as a female; but, when called up by her feelings to illuminate, in a manner, her whole countenance, its expression and animation were wonderful; and the scintillation of her

beaming eyes, in which shone her whole soul, struck a kind of awe into the beholder, who felt fearful, at that moment, of offending her; though there was nothing fierce or vindictive in her looks; but they seemed to evince a superiority of intellect, a beaming of something unearthly—so that Folly became silenced, and mischievous Wit was divested of her arrows.

She knew, however, that Howard was one of the best tempered men in the world; and though Alice was hasty, and her feelings remarkably quick and keen, yet was her heart most tender; and the delicious softness that had, of late, more prevailed in her eyes, than their heretofore wild brilliancy, now again swam in them, and she soon made an excuse to pass over to the side where Howard was seated, chatted and laughed with her sister, and soon found an opportunity to address herself to him, and, by degrees, they became quite as good friends as ever,

ever, and she parted from him and her sister, with a cordial embrace.

In about three days after the arrival of Mr. Fennel and his daughter in town, the latter received the following letter from Macgregor, dated from the village where she had first seen him :

“ MINE AIN HEART'S DEAREST TREASURE,
 “ Frae the scene of my happiest hours, as I view the meadows through which I ha' sae often wandered wi' my sweet Alice, I date this letter. I did swear, alas! never to see thee mair; but manly strength in vain struggles against the superior force of love, and I ha' nae fortitude sufficient to quit and renounce what I canna preserve: yet, if this pure passion did nae teach us to support, to believe, and to hope, what would be our destiny? Ah! it is a divine breath that vivifies our souls, a sacred, mysterious

rious sentiment, which cannot be analyzed.

“ I ha’ been in mine ain countrie, at the wedding of a friend : ah, Alice ! ‘ Ilka heart was blythe but me.’

“ Thou, sweet lassie, hast been smoothing the pillow of sickness ; thine eyne have wept o’er the dead ! Ah, Alice ! the beauteous gowan, like thine ain sel, and the deformed figure of he who can never cease to love thee, must all submit to the King of Terrors. Ah, then, sweet Alice, scorn me not, because I am not beauteous as thou art ! I feel, I feel right sair, I can nae langer live without thee ; and when I sware to see thee nae mair, I spake most rashly. Oh, lovely Alice ! I must again behold thee ; and if thou wilt not bless me with thine hand for life, let me ainly see thee once mair, before I bid thee again adieu for ever ! Pity, oh, pity, and refuse not thy love to thine ain through life, and even in death,

MACGREGOR.”

“ Ah ! ”

“ Ah,” thought Alice, “ it is but a short time ago that I wished, most ardently, to see Macgregor again, and I have languished, day after day, to receive a letter from him. Oh that I never *had* received it, since it contains a renewal of those proposals, that, much as I esteem him (and that to such a height that I could almost fancy I loved him), I never can accept! Unhappy man! and oh, unhappy Alice! that ought, above all others, to feel for the victim of slighted love, but who selfishly thinks only of her own sorrows. How sweetly dost thou define the passion of love! and woman knows that real love pardons every offence, and, therefore, Macgregor, I pardon thee. Oh, Macgregor! in spite of thy outward defects, thy mind is all, and more than even my fancy ever painted to be that of the most perfect northern hero, when my delighted eye has wandered over the pages of the most enchanting writings
that

that ever were penned : but the dream is over—the veil of illusion is drawn away, and thou hast arrived too late !”

CHAPTER IX.

Meetings, &c.

ALICE now dreaded the seeing Macgregor as much as she had before desired it : he arrived the day after that she had received his letter, in the dusk of the evening, in a hackney coach. On his entering the parlour, where she happened to be alone, he hastened to her, and clasped the trembling and agitated girl to his throbbing bosom.—“ Ah, my bonnie Alice !” said he, “ I could nae come into thine adored presence till I had first visited the cherished spot where thou didst tell me of thy love.”

“ Yes, sir,” said Alice, with tears,
“ but,

“but, recollect, it was not——” Here her voice failed her—she could proceed no farther: she was about to say—“It was not you I said I loved;” but compassion held her mute, for she thought Macgregor looked pale and thin.

“Art thou not glad to see me, Alice?” said he, mournfully.

“Ever as my friend—ah, as a brother!” said Alice; “but not, Macgregor, in the way your letter seems to imply: I cannot receive you as a lover.”

“And yet,” said he, “when last we parted, I felt assured that Alice Fennel loved me. Ah! hast thou not tauld me that thou lovest thine ain Macgregor?”

“Oh, no, no!” said Alice—“the most faithful friendship, the most unvarying esteem, that is all this heart has now to offer you: you know it, Macgregor; why then need I repeat my firm resolution to lead a single life?”

Her father now entered, and after cordially shaking the Highland chief by his
his

his single hand, some desultory conversation took place; when, in the midst of it, a loud knock was heard at the door, and the servant-maid entered, saying—
 “Sir, Mr. Robert Butler is in the next room; for, hearing you had a gentleman with you, and he is just come off his journey, and in his travelling-dress, he would not come in, but will, if you please, speak to you, in the next parlour.”

“He still hates the sight of me,” thought Alice.

“Come along, Mac,” said Fennel, “and I will introduce you to a most worthy young fellow.”

“Wi’ pleasure, my gude friend,” said Macgregor; “and after I ha’ seen the son of thine ain dearest friend, I will gang awa’.”

“No, no,” said Fennel, “he will not stay five minutes; he has not seen his father yet, I know, since his arrival.”

Macgregor then accompanied Fennel
 into

into the next parlour, and Alice overheard the joyful congratulations of her father on the health and safety of his friend's son : she listened with pleasure to the fine tones of his manly voice, his correct English, the elegance of his expressions ; and the answers of Macgregor grated disagreeably on her ear, as he strove not to correct his native Scotch, which he generally had done of late, when speaking to her.

Her father had not been gone many minutes before he returned, presenting Robert Butler to her, who, with a polite bow, and just taking hold of her three fingers, with the utmost indifference said, he hoped she was, as she looked, incomparably well. She bowed—she ventured to look up, and she thought—“ How beautiful are *two* fine eyes ! yet what a saucy, triumphant consciousness of being handsome there is expressed in those of this insensible man ! ”

“ Miss

“ Miss Fennel, I am ashamed to appear before you,” said Robert, “ in this trim,” (the dress was remarkably becoming to him.) “ My father, I fear, will be a little jealous of the power of your charms, for I could not, positively, go home till I had seen you.”

“ I find, sir,” said Alice, somewhat mortified, “ that your late excursion has not diminished your great propensity to quizzing.”

“ Who, me !” said Robert, carrying on the same tone of *persiflage*, “ I never quizzed any one ; I have too much of honest John Bull in me ; I am apt to be too blunt. Now, do not you know, my dear Miss Fennel, that I dislike every thing that is fictitious ? How goes on your Scotch novel reading now ? You have given up one part of it, I find, and that is the dialect : you speak good English now, and you must teach your husband to correct his pronunciation a little. I understand you are
soon

soon to be married to that gentleman I have just been introduced to."

"Sir, I am not," said Alice "reddening with anger; "and whoever told you so, misinformed you."

"Nay, be not displeased, Miss Fennel, I am sure I did not invent the report; it was your own father, who is truth itself, that told me of the intended wedding."

"Sir! my father! Oh, never, never!" She could say no more, but burst into tears.

"My dear Miss Fennel," said Robert, attempting to take her hand, which she withdrew, and moved towards the door, "be assured that your happiness is much dearer to me than you imagine; allow me, sure you will allow me, to wish you *much* happiness with an honest-hearted, and, I hope, not an unworthy man."

"Holloa! what is all this to-do about?" said Fennel, entering. "I am
ashamed

ashamed of you, Alice. What! are you and Mr. Robert Butler never to meet without hostility?—Sir, I am sorry to say my daughter is a foolish girl; don't mind her."

"You will allow me to withdraw, sir, I hope," said Alice, addressing her father.

"No, I will not; stay where you are, if you please."

Robert now took his leave; and it was not many minutes after he had left the house, before poor Macgregor came in, wrapped in his huge plaid cloak, and looking the image of despair.—"Farewell, Alice," said he, in an accent of despair that thrilled to her very soul; "farewell, now, for ever! It is nae possible that thou shouldst prefer the unsightly Macgregor before Mr. Robert Butler."

"Oh, stay, Macgregor," said Alice, "only one minute!—But what would I say?"

say? „what must I do? what will become of mé?”

Macgregor, however, was gone, and she indulged herself in giving way to tears, which in some measure relieved the oppression of her heart, and when her father returned, she appeared tolerably composed. At one time her usual frankness prompted her to confide the secret of her hopeless love to her father, from whom, formerly, she had no concealments; but shame, and pride also, tied her tongue, for she knew full well that her father would instantly divulge what she told him to the repository of all his thoughts, his dear friend Butler: this idea was, of all others, the most agonizing to her feelings; for Alice, by one of those strange caprices of fate, by a mere accident, yet highly interesting, as it fell out, had fallen deeply in love with the accomplished, handsome, but, alas! insensible, Mr. Robert Butler.

We meant to have devoted an entire
chapter

chapter to elucidations, but we are assured it is unnecessary; the reader must already have guessed that Alice Fennel was the original of the Cherub and the Sleeping Beauty that had led captive the heart and senses of young Butler, and that Mr. Fennel and his daughter were the persons whom this enthusiastic young man had snatched from the peril of fire, and saved their lives. This fire owed its origin to novel reading; but not *Scotch* novel reading; no, it was owing to the maid-servant, who was as fond of the marvellous as the young lady-lodger: but she, the maid, loved to read all about *ghostesses*, and *them* kind of things, or an account of what was right *arnest*, a dreadful murder, for the moderate charge of one penny; and in the perusal of the latter work she was engaged in bed, had fallen asleep at the conclusion, without putting out her candle, and it had caught her window-curtains: she did not sleep so sound

sound. but that the flame awakened her, and she ran out, screaming for assistance, letting the flames spread; and just then, as the neighbours were alarmed, Mr. Robert Butler arrived, and the fire was got under.

Robert distinguished not the features of his father's friend, owing to the appearance of suffocation, and the pallid hue of his generally florid countenance. In her shame, hurry, and anxiety, Alice, never having lifted her head from its pillow, his bosom, brought no recollection to her deliverer of Miss Fennel; he saw only the Sleeping Beauty, exactly in the posture of the painting he had so long admired. But Alice had stolen a look at the young man, whose present conduct had appeared, to her ardent mind, an act of singular heroism. Love took his sudden and certain aim, and thence arose, on the part of Alice, that pensiveness, that abjuration of all that was unpleasant or disagreeable to Robert

bert Butler; and even Scotch novel reading, as well as the dialect, began to lose its charms.

Fennel, always master of himself on *important* occasions, when he put the cherub's picture into the hands of Robert, had, the moment previous to that action, recollected his person; but Fennel instantly averted his head, and, as he quitted him, tried, with success, to disguise his voice, and then hastened out of sight, while Robert was obliged to drive off, with all the rapidity that travelling post would allow.

The surgeon, who had some time been established in the village, was formerly an assistant to Mr. Fennel, and had procured for that gentleman and his daughter the country lodging they then began to occupy; the surgeon had married for a second wife the amiable woman we introduced to our readers, and a pleasant intimacy had just taken place between that lady and Alice.

Fennel, after the alarm of fire, returned to town for a short time, and then took a temporary rural abode in another county; but previous to his quitting Kent, he confided his plans to the surgeon and his wife, and charged them to be secret as to his name and place of abode, should Mr. Robert Butler call on them on his return to England, as he had promised.

Fennel plainly saw the impression his daughter had received, but, like her, he feared it would be hopeless; and little did he imagine, that Robert had already fallen in love with his daughter's picture.

The lower part of the countenance of this extraordinary girl was cherub-like, and sweetly dimpled; but the expression of her eyes, as has been before remarked, was peculiär. While she was absorbed in the perusal of Scotch novels, the visionary ideas floating in her brain, from her romantic ardour, her eyes had a
wildness

wildness that lighted up all their native fire and almost dazzling brilliancy, but which destroyed the witchery of the feminine expression of her countenance; for it was, in general, the index of her heart, and that heart was most pure, and her nature shrunk from aught that might wound female delicacy.

The painter, who had taken three beautiful pictures of her—the last just after she returned from her visit to Mrs. Hannah Meredith, and in her usual style of dress—had long been acquainted with Mr. Fennel; the artist entreated of him to allow his daughter to sit to him for a cherub's head, for an altar-piece. Fennel, though by no means a strict or precise father, was, nevertheless, rather tenacious of his daughter's beauty, and did not admire publicity of any kind, as far as it related to females, and he consented only, on condition that the most profound secrecy should be observed as to the original, observing—"I
L 2 will

will not have every puppy boasting, as he says—‘ Oh, I am well acquainted with the young lady that sat for that head !’

“ Sir,” said the painter, “ I will preserve the exact likeness ; but I do not wish to paint the eyes of Miss Fennel ; if I do, secrecy will be in vain ; and they are too *mobile*, too vivacious, for those of a cherub.”

Fennel then readily accorded his consent.

It was a neat custom, that the late Mrs. Fennel had taught her daughters, always to bind their hair up carefully under their nightcaps, so that no part of it should stray from beneath them.

Fennel had once occasion to go into his daughter’s chamber, for a key that always laid on her dressing-table. Alice had retired to rest, for the painter had stayed late with her father, over a glass of the famous old port. Alice lay fast asleep, and looked charming. The father’s

ther's vanity could not forbear urging him to call up the painter to look at his beautiful girl.

"What would I give now for such a picture!" said the artist.

"Ay," whispered Fennel, "and what would I not give you to paint it for *me*?"

The painter, an enthusiast in his art, never went out without his drawing materials in a side-pocket; he sketched directly the lineaments of the face, so like, so very like, that, on Fennel's return with him into the parlour, he said—"Come here again at five o'clock in the morning," (it was then summer) "I will be on the watch, and let you in; she sleeps sound; my darling has known neither sin nor sorrow: but you must take no copy of this picture; it must be reserved, exclusively, for me; and I will give you an hundred and fifty guineas if you paint me a picture of my Alice, sleeping, as large as life, and one that

L 3

will

will satisfy me as well as that cherub's head."

The artist agreed ; he came again at five : Alice slept the sound and peaceful sleep of innocence ; her posture was better for the effect of portrait painting than on the preceding night, for her finely-rounded arm was discovered, and this the painter instantly sketched, added a few more touches to the countenance, and told Fennel, that, by the aid of the cherub's face, if he would only procure him one more view of her, sleeping, it would then be sufficient for him to make a most beautiful and finished picture of her. Twice he came in vain ; once he stayed very late ; but though she had quitted the parlour, she had not retired to rest ; but as candlelight was not so favourable, he did not repine much at this disappointment : a few mornings after he came at five ; he found the perverse lady up, and seated at her cham-

chamber-window, reading "Old Mortality."

Fennel, the painter, and Alice, made a party, purposely planned by the father, to the theatre, a few nights after; the artist stayed all night, and found Alice very fast asleep at four the next morning. He made a most complete and striking likeness, and finished the drapery and laced nightcap at home.

Fennel knew not that Robert Butler had fallen absolutely in love with this sleeping beauty; he had not charged the artist to keep it from every eye—on the contrary, he had left the picture with him, because he thought it did him so much credit—and as no one would dream that it was Miss Fennel so taken, he was very indifferent as to who might see it; and he was desirous of having a small room, that he called his study, new painted, and the paint well dried and aired before he had the picture home.

Robert Butler was an excellent judge

of painting—handled the pencil well himself—and the painter was always pleased to converse with him on an art that Robert so well understood, and on which he made such judicious remarks; yet, the artist feared, he had not acted exactly as Mr. Fennel would have wished, 'in so often indulging the gaze of young Butler, as it dwelt, enraptured, on this lovely portrait; he therefore never told Mr. Fennel of the great admiration it had excited in this amateur; but we have before recorded how circumspect and faithful the artist was in never divulging the name of the fair original.

When Mr. Fennel and his daughter returned to town after the fire, the picture was brought home, hung up in the study, and locked up, while Alice took her last sitting for the picture Robert saw at the painter's near the door, which was intended to ornament Mr. Howard's dining-parlour.

Cupid,

Cupid, that mischievous rogue, had not only, in the midst of flames and smoke, pierced the gentle bosom of Alice Fennel, but, as Robert clasped the form he had long been searching for in vain to his bosom, he caused one of his sharpest arrows to glide into the heart of Robert, who, very soon afterwards, resolved to make himself happy, by complying with the wishes of his parent. But, alas ! he too felt assured he loved in vain, for that Alice Fennel then only regarded him with aversion.

No one knew better than Fennel all the symptoms of "that little rogue, Love." He watched the pensiveness, the softness of Alice, after the event of the fire ; he was sure that her deliverer had inspired her with the tenderest affection ; and with joy he communicated his ideas to Butler, who, as he had seen nothing in his son to hope that he had been mutually smitten, felt yet fearful and anxious.

The Scottish hero was introduced by Fennel to his daughter—the son of a very old friend. He was very soon completely captivated by the charming Alice; by her candour, innocence, and excellent understanding, so long buried in the romantic enthusiasm of the moment; even that very enthusiasm began to have charms for him.

The result of his instructions has been already related; together with the confession Alice made to Macgregor of her love for another, which was Robert Butler—a confession that her native delicacy trembled at making, but which she divulged, in order to prevent the further love persecutions of the generous-minded Macgregor, which her modesty urged her to declare, had its origin in gratitude for Robert having risked his own life to save that of her father and her own.

CHAPTER X.
~~~~~*The Declaration and Dénouement.*

IN about a week from the time that Macgregor paid his farewell visit to Mr. Fennel, a family party was engaged to meet at Mr. Howard's, where they were to dine precisely at five, and where there were to be present only Mr. Fennel, and his daughter Alice, with Mr. Butler, and his son Robert.

Never had Alice before seen her father so elated; yet all his actions and behaviour were marked with an agitation, that made him appear not to know, in any degree, what he was about. He was hurrying Alice to get herself dress-

ed by one o'clock; though, as to himself, he had not been under the operation of the razor. On his daughter remonstrating with him, he said—"I have business to transact; I wish you was dressed, I tell you—I want you out of my way."

"Oh, I shall not be in your way, sir; but as you seem so much to desire it, I will dispatch my toilet as hastily as I can, and then I will go before you, and chat an hour or two with my sister before you come."

"No, no," said Fennel; "I expect the Butlers to call here for us; and as I told you before, I shall be very busy for an hour or so, therefore I shall want you to receive them, and to talk to them, till I am dressed."

The name of the Butlers acted as a magic charm over the mind of Alice, that palpitated her bosom, and crimsoned her cheek; she replied not, but went up stairs, and made her toilet a serious care.

care. Her glossy ringlets wanted but little aid from art; but how sweetly did she teach them, this morning, to stray over her temples and finely-shaped head! that most important, most dignified, and most beautiful part of the human frame being adorned with the silky chestnut threads that nature had planted on it, and spread over it in such profusion: she sat down, and recollected that there was a time—that Robert Butler had one evening regarded her with looks of much admiration; but, at that time, her heart was free as air, and perfectly indifferent to either his censures or his praise. She was habited that evening as Anot Lyle, and she resolved this day to dress the same way; she put the heath, which she meant to entwine in her hair, in paper, to carry in her reticule, and soon she made herself look most lovely in the completion of her Scottish costume. She feared, however, to derange her ringlets by putting on her Scotch cap, and

and therefore she shielded her features in a large walking bonnet of light materials, and enveloped her fanciful dress beneath a pelisse of purple silk : she looked, in this guise, the image of dignified simplicity, as she entered the parlour, at about twenty minutes after two o'clock, hastened there by repeated messages from her father, that she would use dispatch ; the last informing her, that Mr. Butler had been waiting for her above ten minutes.

Mr. Butler, indeed ! She ventured, as she stood with her back to the servant, to ask her, if *both* the Mr. Butlers were below ?

“ I believe not, Miss,” was the answer.

Alice, therefore, experienced no agitation as she descended ; but the object that met her eyes when she reached the parlour caused a deep blush to glow on her cheek : it was only *one* Mr. Butler, it is true ; but that one person was Robert, whose very handsome appearance,  
this

this morning, proved that the toilet had been as important a care to him as to herself.

Instead of the saucy indifference that had used to meet her looks, from a pair of eyes, that she had now found out were the finest in the world, she beheld a rapturous kind of admiration, checked by a soft timidity, that caused her eyelids to fall; but her father gave her but little time for reflection, as he said, with quickness—"Mr. Robert Butler, my dear, has come thus early, to request you will take a walk with him, before dinner, in Hyde Park: it is a lovely morning—more like spring than winter, and the walk will do you good. Come back here, and take a little refreshment; I shall then be ready, and we will all go to Howard's together."

Lovers are often the most ineloquent creatures in the world: even the accomplished Robert Butler felt awkward, as he advanced towards Alice, and could  
but

but just stammer out—"Will Miss Fennel do me the honour?"

Alice courtesied, and "blushed consent."

And now, behold two, whose hearts were given each other in mutual exchange, walking silently on, to that sylvan scene, Hyde Park, their silence only broken by some commonplace remark on the beauty of the weather, but each animated by the same feelings, the tenderness of which increased when they arrived at one rural and retired spot, bringing to one painful, to the other, the most delightful recollections. Robert took the trembling hand of Alice, and pressed it, with gentle fervour, to his breast: he then said, with a faltering voice—"Alice, do you remember the meadow, where you walked, the latter end of last autumn, with Macgregor, in your way to the vicar's cottage?"

"Sir!" said Alice, lost in wonder, and attempting to withdraw her hand.

"No,"

“No,” resumed Robert, “think not I will part with this treasure, this blest assurance of my future happiness through life! Oh, Alice! have you then forgotten the soft confession you made to your friend Macgregor, at a time when I little dreamed of that felicity—a felicity, which will render my sojournment on this earth a paradise?”

“Oh, Macgregor!” said Alice, bursting into tears, “you have cruelly betrayed me! and I am become the victim to the contemptuous sarcasm of——”

“Hold, Miss Fennel!” interrupted Robert—“spare me! let not me be the victim of your anger, or your ill opinion. Hear me, while I declare the solemn truth, that, before the night of the fire, which made me yours for ever, I had long loved your image: and when I beheld it at the painter’s, who made so charming a picture of you, when sleeping, when I have contemplated it for hours, I swore never to own another  
love;

love; like yourself, I rashly vowed to lead a single life, if I could not find the lovely original. By a seeming accident, though providentially brought about, I find her in the daughter of my father's dearest friend, the charming female whom he once urged me, in vain, to make my wife. You see, Miss Fennel, I am candid and sincere, when I tell you, that all my father could say in your favour was in vain; but you are not the Alice Fennel you then was."

"Sir," said Alice, "as captain Macgregor has been so perfidious as to betray me, it is useless for me to deny what I told him; however, I certainly could not know what I was saying at the time. I am much obliged to you for the *pity* and *compassion* which, I suppose, actuate your present protestations to a foolish, *lovesick* damsel, as you may be pleased to think me; but you may be yet mistaken, sir." This she endeavoured to accompany with a smile

smile of facetiousness; but though her manner was haughty, the smile was that of bitterness.

“ Alice,” said Robert, “ resort not to falsehood ; ‘ guard thy heart ’ is apostolic advice ; and a female never guards her heart so well, as when she is united to the object of her love. Do not wrong me, Alice ; but, believe me when I tell you, that I have not only loved you long before I knew you, but that I have suffered much since, in the dread of my love for you being hopeless. We have long misunderstood each other—let us now act with candour, and reflect how happy is wedlock, when its sacred bands are bound closer by mutual affection.”

Alice was softened ; but she whispered —“ Oh, Macgregor ! could I have expected this from you ? ”

“ Blame not Macgregor,” said Robert ; “ be assured he never will betray your confidence.”

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! he has already,” said Alice, weeping.

“ No, Alice ; if he has seemed to betray you, it was only to lead you to happiness ; a marriage between us *must* be happy ; mutual affection, consent of parents, affluence—oh, my Alice !—for I *will* call you my own—you must accord unto Macgregor that generous pardon, which woman alone knows how to grant ; the wounds of his once-lacerated heart were partly healed by your friendship, and his sole desire was your felicity.”

We really cannot record any more of young Butler’s arguments to reconcile Alice to the confession she had made in his favour to Macgregor. With her own native modesty such a confession might well be supposed to be at war, the handsome object of her love being in her presence. Robert, however, did at length succeed in making her at peace with herself ; and sequestered then  
from

from every obtruding eye, he respectfully entreated of her to allow him to seal his happiness on her ruby lips: timidly she received the pressure of what she fancied the first kiss of love, when, to her astonishment, she heard him utter—"Ah, bonnie Alice, it is nae lang syne sin I wore on my lip the red mustachio; and then thou didst, o' thine ain will, press thy bonnie' mou to' mine."

Alice, dismayed at the voice and accent, gave a piercing shriek; and again vexed at what she now began to think and fear was but *persiflage* on the part of her lover, she essayed to withdraw her hand.

"No, Alice, no," said Robert—"you have given me this dear hand, and, while I live, I will never part with it! Sweet, ingenuous girl! be assured, by all the ties of love, honour, virtue, and religion, that Macgregor and Robert Butler will never betray, nor pain, for one moment, the heart that has trusted in him—

him—for Macgregor and Robert Butler are the same!”

He then explained to her, that, in concurrence with her father and his own, he had adopted the disguise of a Scotch officer; but there certainly was no way of concealing his countenance without rendering himself hideous; but then to be wounded only in the face would look suspicious; one arm, therefore, was concealed, and many a cramp it gave him under his waistcoat, and the sleeve of his jacket hung loose on the outside.

We assure our prolific novel-writers that we have not borrowed from them, in recording Macgregor's *red wig, sticking out in every direction*: we only know, that Robert Butler resorted to it, as the most effectual means of disguise in the world, to one who was gifted by nature with dark eyes and eyebrows; those false red ones were stuck on with gum, as were the mustachios,

chios, and they rendered him perfectly incognisable.

At the elucidation of this event, and also at the thought of her father having had a hand in the deception, Alice could not sometimes forbear laughing—"But," said she, with seriousness, "you ought not, even in jest, to have falsified your oath. You swear, as you solemnly lifted up your hand to heaven, that you would not divulge the secret I intrusted you with: yet you must have told my father."

"Believe me, dear Alice, when I assure you I did not. I told your father that I had hopes, under my character of Macgregor, of being almost sure of obtaining your love; I therefore departed, like Mercury when personating Sosia, to get rid of my ugly phiz: but, pardon me a little foolish vanity I was guilty of, when I, in one evening, presented myself to you, both as Macgregor and as your faithful Robert; it was like the  
silly

silly frolic of a schoolboy, and I was, at first, very angry with myself; yet it was rapture to my heart, for I felt that you loved the saucy Robert, though you felt the truest friendship for what you thought the worth of Macgregor. Oh, Alice! if I have any, I owe it all to you, who inspired me with ambition to appear, and really to become amiable in your eyes. Indeed, I am of the same opinion as a recent German writer, where he says ‘God surely consecrated the heart of woman for the salvation of man.’”

Alice ventured timidly to look up; she yet felt abashed, and the fear of Robert’s not feeling all he uttered pervaded her mind: she beheld his eyes suffused with tears of softness and rapture.—“My own Alice,” said he, pressing her trembling form to his heart, “will you believe me, when I tell you, that I was once, as Macgregor, jealous of myself? For a trifling act of compassion, which  
you

you was pleased to overrate, you so caressed the hideous *Scottish chief*, that I feared you really loved *him*; and, conscious as I felt of your dislike to Robert Butler, I dreaded, then, the time when I should discover myself."

They were now directing their course homewards; they had been absent about two hours; but lovers heed not the flight of time, and they appeared to each as minutes only.

Arrived in the presence of his father, at the house of the worthy Fennel, Robert presented the blushing Alice to his father.—"She is mine," said he; "oh, let me receive the precious blessing from a parent's hand!"

"Bless ye, my children!" said Butler; and Fennel, at the same instant, repeated the paternal benediction.

A few moments were then given to that exquisite sensation of happiness that causes the tear of joy to overflow; and after partaking of some slight re-

freshment, they found it was time to repair to Mr. Howard's.—“Come up stairs, Alice,” said Mrs. Howard, “and take off your bonnet. I expected,” added she, archly, “that you would make us wait to-day ; so I put off dinner for half an hour.”

Alice, now arrived in the dressing-room of her sister, made her no other answer than giving her a cordial embrace.

“Yes, yes,” said Mrs. Howard, “but I am half angry with you for withholding your confidence from your sister.”

“My dear Elizabeth, I might just as well have told Howard as you.”

“Come, come, Alice, you are very well,” said Mrs. Howard, waving the subject, and not denying the charge ; “why, you have broke that sprig of heath blossom all to pieces, with twisting and twirling it about to make it look more becoming : I am sure the dinner is served.”

Alice

Alice accompanied her sister to the dining-parlour; but, indeed, we cannot take upon ourselves to record all the tender glances and pretty sentences that were exchanged between Mr. Robert Butler and Miss Fennel; we only know, that very soon after this day, one was fixed for the union of these lovers, greatly to the satisfaction of all parties; and we also know, that Robert Butler led his blushing Alice to her sister's piano, and made her play and sing that Scotch air that Macgregor had taught her to perform well; which song often brought to his mind his "Sleeping Beauty," as he taught her to sing with expression the two lines at its commencement—

"Love wakes and weeps,  
While Beauty sleeps!"

Now it is better for us to finish rather abruptly, than that beauty *should* sleep,

or even yawn over our pages: though Alice sang the lines penned by her favourite author, with that pathos which would have rendered any one, but an infatuated lover," fearful that she was about to relapse into all her former enthusiasm, yet Robert thought only of the sleeping fair he had so long worshipped on canvàs, so unexpectedly discovered, and so "rapturously caught to his throbbing heart.

We have, we hope, done our duty in awakening our romantic girl from her airy dream of Scotch perfection; we have every reason to hope that she will cease her admiration of all modern quackery, and be a happy wife. As to the subordinate characters, as we know not, at present, how they may be disposed of—we cannot inform our readers. Mr. Jenkins is gone to Paris, where he has met with Miss Southgate, who, it is said—"oh, tell it not in Gath!"—has some thoughts  
of

of bestowing her hand on him in marriage; and Miss Underwood is about to be led to the altar, by an old earl.

FINIS.

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